

DECOLONIZATION AND AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE

The Transfers of Power, 1960–1980



EDITED BY PROSSER GIFFORD AND WM. ROGER LOUIS

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Roughly a quarter of a century has passed since the majority of African nations gained their independence. The euphoria of the early 1960s has in many instances disappeared in the face of civil wars, famine, disease, and plunder, and now a guarded skepticism prevails. The time is ripe for an assessment of what independence in Africa actually meant and what has been accomplished. This book, edited by Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, includes essays by some of the world's most distinguished authorities on Africa—many of them from Africa. These historians assess the conditions in their countries at the time of the transfer of political authority and analyze the consequences of the ways in which independence was achieved.

The book includes general overviews of decolonization as well as case studies of individual countries and two bibliographical essays. Numerous provocative questions are raised by the essays, including: To what degree was the structure of the colonial state an inhibiting legacy and how much did the new African leaders manipulate or alter it? Why did the transfers of power happen when they did? Was independence

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of a “transfer of power” was British in origin and Indian in context. On August 15, 1947, the Government of India transferred its authority to the successor governments of India and Pakistan. The two new states took over the management of their own financial and military affairs in addition to political power. Their achievement of independence marked an event just as significant as the independence of the United States more than a hundred and fifty years earlier. One of the questions posed by this volume is whether or not the independence won by the African states in the three decades after 1950 fell short of the independence gained by India and Pakistan after the Second World War, or for that matter the United States after the American Revolution.

Even in the Indian and Pakistani cases “independence” did not mean a clean break with the imperial power. Both states remained in the Commonwealth, as did all of the former postwar British African dependencies except the Sudan. What then was the nature of the Commonwealth ties, and how did they differ from those linking the former French dependencies with France? Was Guinea’s “independence” substantially more real because of its break with France? Was “independence” camouflage for continued dependence? Whatever the intention, what is the reality?

The phrase *transfer of power* is intended to provide a neutral concept to examine these controversial questions, though to some authors in the present book the phrase itself is controversial. The issue of initiative—freedom seized or independence granted—runs through many of the chapters. To those who first used the term *transfer of power*, India would gain independence systematically, in measured pace and orderly manner. The term can thus reflect a Whiggish disposition. Yet it was also used by Indians who did not hesitate to employ British terminology for their own purposes.¹ It seemed clear that

1. See, e.g., V. P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957). For critical examination of the concept see especially Hugh Tinker, “Burma: Power Transferred or Exacted?” *India Office Library and Record Report for January 1983 to March 1984*; and Peter Lyon, “Transfer and Transformation,” in Peter Lyon and James Maynor, eds., *Transfer and Transform-*

actual administrative, financial, and military power was being handed over, regardless of who seized the initiative. These functions were manifestly being transferred at a specific time. This is the impartial usage we bring to this volume. The transfer of power as a theme helps to sharpen the issue of political transition from the colonial to the post-colonial era. It assists in identifying those aspects of state authority, such as the machinery of the state and functions of public office, that were immediately put in the hands of African leaders. It throws into relief the economic and social dimension of African societies that often changed little, if at all, at the time of independence, while demonstrating the continuity of the bureaucracy. Transfer of power is not to be confused with "Africanization" (the gradual takeover of the bureaucracy by Africans), which sometimes began long before the formal transfer of authority. Nor did the transfer of power necessarily involve the termination of employment of Europeans, who often continued to work (as for example, civil servants, military officers, and educators) in the service of the new state long after independence.

There is also a distinction to be made between "decolonization" and transfer of power. The notion of decolonization had its beginnings in the interwar years and was originally applied mainly to the French colonies. It generally came to mean the emancipation of Asia and Africa from European control, economic no less than political. It can also imply cultural and psychological freedom. It can include the liberation achieved by those who have found or rediscovered their true identity. Transfer of power on the other hand is a much more restricted but nonetheless meaningful concept. Translating it as "transfert du pouvoir" (a somewhat less emotional phrase in French), the French used it originally to describe developments in the dissolution of the British Empire, where there appeared to be more substantial changes than in the transition occurring in the French overseas territories. Yet the term is now broadly used. It has proved to be a useful concept to invoke when examining the end of all the overseas European empires.

"Is the last soldier," asked the high commissioner as the termination of the mandate in Palestine approached, "to see the last locomotive into the engine shed, lock the door and keep the key?"² To whom should the key be given,

mation: Political Institutions in the New Commonwealth (Leicester, 1983). Important works relevant to the themes of the present volume are: Michael Crowder, ed., *The Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. 8, *From c. 1940 to c. 1975* (Cambridge, 1985); A. Adu Boahen, *Africa under Colonial Domination, 1800-1935*, vol. 7 of the UNESCO *General History of Africa* series (Berkeley, 1985); Gwendolen M. Carter and Patrick O'Meara, eds., *African Independence* (Bloomington, Ind., 1986); and Robert J. Berg and Jennifer Seymour Whitaker, eds., *Strategies for African Development* (Berkeley, 1986).

2. Sir Alan Cunningham to Arthur Creech Jones (colonial secretary), "Top Secret & Personal" telegram, 25 November 1947, Cunningham Papers III/3/111, St. Antony's College, Oxford.

Jew or Arab? Is the recipient necessarily a “collaborator”? In similar and sometimes subtle ways the questions recurred in virtually all the colonial regimes. They go to the heart of the matter. The high commissioner referred to railways controlled by the state. The transfer of power applies to the handing over of the control of the state’s resources and the government’s business. There can be a transfer of public authority without an accompanying institutional transformation. From this point of view, the early nationalists may appear to the next generation as collaborators, though the charge would have been heatedly denied by the Africans actually participating in the transfer of power. In any case, those who collaborated were just as significant as those who resisted.

One does not have to be a Marxist to see the utility of the idea of the “colonial state.” It has proved to be a galvanizing theme, which explains the place of Crawford Young’s chapter as the first in the book. Like the concept of transfer of power, its usage is controversial, but the general significance may be summarized as follows. The African states at the time of independence inherited: international boundaries; military and police forces that could, with varying degrees of efficiency, hold the state together; a revenue system based on agricultural products and raw materials, the external value of which would fluctuate with the world market; in the British and French cases, either elected local legislatures or elected representatives in a metropolitan parliament; and, usually, a network of government offices complete with files, typewriters, and telephones. There were great discrepancies in economic resources and size as well as in training and competence of officials.

Previously these territories had existed as administrative units of the European powers. Yet they were nascent states, each in the process of acquiring within artificial boundaries the characteristics of the sovereign states of Europe, but in a period of decades rather than centuries. Each had its own system of education, yet the Belgian Congo at the time of independence had produced only a handful of leaders with the equivalent of a university training. The colonial state was a European appendage, created by Europeans for European purposes. Its economy was subordinate to that of the European system. In the Marxist view the colonial state was a variant of the capitalist state.³ It functioned with varying degrees of autonomy. The attempt to develop representative institutions occurred far too late to change the established character of the colonial state. There is thus a continuity of structure in the reversion after independence of many of the African states to authoritarian regimes resembling the centralized, paternal regimes of early colonial times. What is surprising about the aftermath of independence is not so much the

3. See, e.g., John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, “Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895–1914,” *Journal of African History* 20 (1979).

brutality of Africa's politics, or the shambles of many of its economies, but the stability of the state system. Governments might come and go, some leaders might turn into tenacious and destructive tyrants, but the state survives. The boundaries remain essentially the same as those created during the continent's partition in the late nineteenth century, and the languages of administration, law, and education remain overwhelmingly those of the European colonizer.

Yet, if pressed too far, either dogmatically or ideologically, the concept of the colonial state becomes a scapegoat carrying the sins of previous generations.⁴ Bearing in mind the undoubted greed and cunning of Africa's colonial exploitation, to what extent can the Europeans who liquidated the colonial regimes be held accountable for the subsequent developments of post-colonial Africa? What of the African leaders themselves? How do African scholars now view the careers of Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré with the benefit of some thirty years since the beginning of their regimes?

At the outset we must acknowledge the precipitancy with which the African states achieved their independence. Within a decade after 1956, the year of the Sudan's independence, almost all of the colonies of sub-Saharan Africa acquired their independence except, as they were called at the time, the Portuguese colonies, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (other exceptions were Swaziland and Equatorial Guinea, which gained independence in 1968, and Djibouti, 1977). The dismantling of colonial empire was even more rapid than its acquisition. What does the present state of historical evidence now reveal about the causes of this haste? Why did the transfers of power happen when they did?

Our preceding companion volume dealt with those questions within the chronological framework of the Second World War and its aftermath, approximately up to the year 1960, when no less than a dozen colonies achieved independence. The present volume pursues the same themes in the actual period of independence in the 1960s and 1970s, but with more emphasis on case studies and the consequences of decolonization. Thus the chapters on Libya and the Sudan, Ghana and Guinea provide the background necessary for the study of the 1960s as well as an analysis of issues of enduring significance, such as the aims of Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré. These chapters form the bridge between the previous volume and the current one and help to explain the unanticipated timing of African independence.

In the companion volume one clear and compelling theme emerged in the argument of Anthony Low, who amplifies his thesis in the present volume: the

4. In its caricature form, "an animal loaded with the sins of a previous generation . . . with horns, hoofs and tail. . . . Around its neck hung a label: 'the post-colonial state.'" Dennis Austin, "What Happened to the Colonial State?" *Round Table* 295 (1985).

nationalists in Africa benefited from the struggle of their fellow nationalists in India and Southeast Asia. The 1950s saw the ascendancy of colonial nationalism in Africa. Decolonization was consistent with the British tradition of self-government and the French principles of liberty, equality, and (in the sense of broader and indissoluble links of language and culture), fraternity. But, when all is said, for the Belgians and eventually the Portuguese as well, decolonization and the transfer of power occurred because of the rising level of African discontent and the ambitions of the elites.

Another organizing theme of the companion volume helps to explain the end of empire in Africa: the idea of the “three tiers” or the interaction of influence at the colonial, metropolitan, and international levels. The European colonial regimes could continue to exist only so long as three requirements were fulfilled: (1) that their colonial subjects acquiesced in their authority; (2) that the politicians and electorates of the metropolitan countries accepted colonial commitments as not entirely unethical and on the whole worthwhile; and (3) that these empires received international recognition. The colonial regimes could not survive the breach of these conditions. After the Second World War they could no longer maintain an indefinite control over Africans on terms acceptable to public sentiment in the European countries, the United States, or the United Nations. Perhaps the African colonies could have been held down indefinitely, but only through an unacceptable metropolitan economic and military commitment. The solution was to transfer power quickly in order to avoid these unacceptable costs while trying to preserve as much influence as possible. The Europeans who transferred authority hoped that the African elites, whom they had educated, would provide favorable opportunities for trade and commerce, defense arrangements, and, in short, a continuation of the colonial relationship in all but name. Whatever the optimistic forecast might have been, the realistic calculation by the late 1950s held that it would pay to quit rather than to take the further political risks of maintaining colonial rule.

All these themes, the primacy of African nationalism on the one hand and the extent of metropolitan and international initiatives on the other, find expression in the present volume. Timothy Weiskel, for example, deals with the question of collaboration and the three tiers within the context of “local and global socio-economic evolution.” It is useful to reduce these issues to fundamental questions: to what extent was independence won by nationalists intent on a new beginning, and how much of it was granted by metropolitan powers bent on preserving as much as possible? How far was the outcome determined by economic or political issues of such magnitude that imperial governments or, for that matter, nationalist movements had only marginal influence? Part of the general answer might hold that decolonization is a

continuing process and the transfer of power only one turning point—a juncture in the bargaining and even haggling over the terms of independence. Both sides struggled to gain or sustain advantage, and all believed that they would influence the political and economic course of the new order.

The end of formal empire bore a similarity to its beginning. In the 1950s and 1960s, just as at the height of the partition in the 1880s and 1890s, the European colonial powers responded to calculations of economic self-interest, strategic security, and local crisis.⁵ If there is any single event that marks the turning point in the dissolution of the African empires, it is the Suez crisis of 1956. The Egyptians at last broke the imperial grip, helped indirectly by the assistance of the United States. It is essential to see Egypt and the Maghrib as part of the crisis of African independence. Libya gained independence in 1951. The repercussions were felt in Tunisia and Morocco, which both became independent in 1956. The Sudan's independence, also in 1956, linked the developments in the Middle East and the Maghrib with those of tropical Africa. The transfer of power in tropical Africa was thus preceded immediately by major adjustments of decolonization in the north.

Just as the partition of Africa in the late nineteenth century should be viewed as part of a world crisis, so also should the comparable European disengagement from Africa in the mid-twentieth century be seen as part of the end of the formal colonial system throughout the world. The prelude to Suez consisted not only of the British evacuation of the Canal Zone in 1954 but also the French defeat in Indochina in the same year. The independence granted to Tunisia and Morocco, as Keith Panter-Brick demonstrates in this volume, was intended generally to safeguard the French position in Algeria, just as the recognition of the Sudan's independence in early 1956 and the continued British presence in Uganda were intended, in part, to preserve British influence in the valley of the Nile. "In any showdown with Egypt," wrote the British colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, in 1955, "the control Uganda gives us of the source of the White Nile must clearly be of paramount importance."⁶

If the Suez crisis and geopolitics—with an echo of the nineteenth century—played a part in the crisis of African independence, what were the antecedents of the events of the 1950s? In the strategic debate within the British government after 1945, the chiefs of staff had already anticipated the eventual withdrawal from Suez because of the strength of Egyptian hostility to the British military presence. The eighty thousand British troops in the Canal

5. For a reassessment of the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 relevant by implication to the present discussion, see A. G. Hopkins, "The Victorians and Africa: A Reconsideration of the Occupation of Egypt, 1882," *Journal of African History* 27, 2 (1986).

6. Minute by Lennox-Boyd, 23 Nov. 1955, FO 371/112622 (Public Record Office, London).

Zone would have to be redeployed. The search for alternative bases was one reason for the renewed scramble for north-African territory at the end of World War II. As Roger Louis makes clear in his chapter, the consolidation of Allied gains in Libya was disguised under the auspices of the United Nations, which gave rise to the myth that Libya was a genuine international territory, the decolonization of which was planned by the United Nations. The reality, as opposed to the myth, was that when Libya received independence in 1951, it had been recolonized, militarily at least, by Britain and the United States with the active assistance of the United Nations. Does this innovation reveal anything generally about the later wave of African independence? What was the balance of imperial and nationalist forces?

The first lesson to be drawn is that pre-independence Libya bids fair to become a paramount example of the colonial state with a distinctly strategic complexion. The British together with the French and the Italians first attempted to build a federal trusteeship regime composed of Cyrenaica (British), Tripolitania (Italian), and the Fezzan (French). This plan collapsed in 1949 because of protest in Tripoli against the return of the Italians. Thus there was an important nationalist component, but hardly one strong enough to have forced the creation of an autonomous Tripolitanian province, much less a Libyan state. The basis of Libyan nationalism was in Cyrenaica. Its leader was Sayid Idris, the spiritual and secular leader of the Senussi. Few Western observers at the time believed him strong enough to hold together the Libyan state. Yet he remained king of Libya until the revolution in 1969. The Europeans provided the structure of the state; the infusion of Senussi religious traditions throughout the state helped to promote a cohesive Libyan nationalism.⁷

The Libyan case demonstrates that a state could be consolidated and to a certain extent controlled after independence. The qualification is important. At the time of independence in 1951, executive, judicial, and legislative authority was transferred to the Libyan government. The British hoped that Libya would remain in the sterling area and would in effect play the part of a client state on the model of Transjordan. But there was no longer direct control. The transfer of power is a reality. The effectiveness of collaboration is a different issue.

If the Sudan before 1956 could be classified as a colonial state, it was one different from all others. Though Britain administered it, Egypt shared the title to the condominium. To add to the ambiguity of political status, its master in London was not the Colonial Office but the Foreign Office (as Tunisia and the French part of Morocco were under the Quai d'Orsay), thereby setting it

7. See Michael Brett, "The U.N. and Libya," *Journal of African History* 13, 1 (1972).

apart from Colonial Office assumptions about dependencies in Africa and placing it within the realm of Foreign Office axioms about the Middle East. The Sudan is the largest territory in Africa. The pace of its constitutional development and the terms of its independence would have large repercussions. In the eyes of the Sudan Political Service, as Martin Daly points out in his chapter, larger political issues extraneous to the Sudan prematurely raised the question of independence. The future had been compromised by appeasing the Egyptians. *Appeasement* was a word that reverberated in British circles in the Sudan in the early 1950s. It raises a question of general importance. Might greater determination not to have granted independence with such abruptness, in the Sudan and elsewhere, have brought about greater long-range stability? Might not an extended British presence in the Sudan or a more prolonged Belgian regime in the Congo, if only for a few years, have had the advantage of provoking a more unified opposition to colonial rule and thus a firmer basis for a national state? What does the sudden end to the British regime in the Sudan reveal about independence in the rest of tropical Africa?

In January 1954 Ismail al-Azhari became the Sudan's prime minister. He had initially favored union with Egypt, and it was a blessing in disguise for the British that they could transfer power to Sudanese who held Egyptian sympathies. Otherwise the British administration might have found itself attempting to suppress a war of independence confronting both Egyptians and pro-Egyptian Sudanese. Azhari's government was effective long before the formal transfer of power. The governor-general wrote in 1954, "Effective power in this country has now been transferred from the British to a purely Sudanese government. . . . British officials are servants and no longer masters."⁸ The independence ceremony on January 1, 1956, was a mere formality. Despite gloomy forecasts about Azhari and his public statements about the need for Egyptian friendship, he proved to be no more of an Egyptian stooge than he was a British stooge. The conclusion is the same as in the case of Libya. The transfer of power is a significant juncture. From then on, the Sudanese managed their own affairs.

Martin Daly's chapter also inquires whether or not the civil war in the Sudan, begun in 1955, might have been averted by more determination on the part of the British to "Sudanize" the administration with southern as well as northern Sudanese. The government officials to whom responsibility was handed over in 1956 included virtually no southern Sudanese. Southerners thus saw in British policy the aim to assimilate them into the northern-Sudanese Arabic and Islamic culture. At least another decade would have been necessary to have integrated the south and to have reached a federal or

8. Sir Robert Howe to Sir Anthony Eden, 4 Feb. 1954, FO 371/108378.

some other solution. But whatever solution the British might or might not have found, was not the Sudan, the largest state in Africa, simply too large and too diverse to constitute a single state? Before independence, in the Sudan as elsewhere, the British had worked toward larger territorial units, whether by attempting to create federations in eastern and central Africa or by upholding the existing federal form of government in Nigeria. Economically, if not ethnically, the larger units seemed to be the only way to make the new states viable.

Yet there are no logical limits to “self-determination.” And there was often a conflict between economic and ethnic realities. The politics of independence mobilized and inflamed ethnic groups, or tribes, which had often been given administrative identity by colonial policies. When Moïse Tshombe proclaimed the rich mining province of Katanga to be an independent state in 1960, did he have any less of a right to claim independence than did Hastings Banda for impoverished Malawi in 1964? Or Emeka Ojukwu when he declared independence for the Republic of Biafra in the eastern region of Nigeria in 1967? Colonial boundaries became, despite their origin, a guarantee against fissiparous disintegration.

Three other chapters address themselves to the problem of “balkanization” and the capacity of the “post-colonial state” to represent the will of the people. Ilunga Kabongo recaptures the excitement and uncertainty of the time of the Congo’s independence and the Katangan secession. Hasu Patel and H. K. K. Bhila describe the consequences of the collapse of the Central African Federation in 1963 and the war leading to Zimbabwean independence in 1980. J. F. Ade. Ajayi and A. E. Ekoko still have vividly in mind the Nigerian civil war of 1967. Each chapter assesses the cost of civil war as one price paid in defining an independent identity. Who is the nation?

Zaire has managed to survive intact because it has become a client state of the United States. Ilunga Kabongo, a student in Kinshasa at the time of the Belgian exodus in 1960, remembers how “‘independence’ was wrapped in an atmosphere of religious, almost mystical, joy and apocalyptic expectation but at the same time of the most tragicomic misunderstanding and fears.” He reassesses the events of a quarter of a century ago with detachment and candor, yet not without a sense of outrage. The Belgians were not compelled to improvise the hasty transfer of power in June 1960. They panicked—and departed. They then made two further fatal mistakes. In July Belgian troops intervened after the mutiny of Congolese troops, followed by Belgian support for the Katanga secession. Their opponent was Patrice Lumumba, a leader of great dynamism with growing popular support and Soviet backing. To Ilunga Kabongo he represents the betrayed ideals of Zairian independence, yet to American officials, at this time obsessed with the danger of communism and

Soviet influence, he appeared to be even worse than their *bête noire*, Fidel Castro. Lumumba's murder by Katangan secessionists in February 1961 sealed the fate of Zaire. The United Nations, through which the United States exerted influence, eventually managed to prevent fragmentation. Stability was achieved in the Congo, but at the price of Mobutu's dictatorship, which Kabongo sees as embodying the worst of the evils of the post-colonial state. This then is a chapter with an indictment, and it reflects the disillusionment of independence. Thematically it buttresses the argument introduced by Crawford Young's chapter.

The creation and demise of the Central African Federation has been dealt with by Prosser Gifford in the companion volume. The argument carries over into the present work: the artificial configurations designed by the British, no matter how rational economically, could not survive without the consent of the African majorities. In central Africa the Africans feared the domination of the white Rhodesians. Here Patel and Bhila provide a sympathetic account of the guerrilla war led by Robert Mugabe against the settler regime of Ian Smith, who in 1965 had unilaterally proclaimed Rhodesia to be an independent state. Mugabe believed that nothing short of prolonged war would bring down the white regime. For the British the problem over the next fifteen years was how to bring about a settlement without being willing to do anything more than to apply economic sanctions. Mugabe's ZANU forces used bases in Mozambique, while the Rhodesian security forces were assisted by South Africa.

At the Lancaster House negotiations sponsored by the British in 1979, Mugabe, to everyone's surprise, agreed to a cease-fire and elections. He did so in part because Mozambique and Zambia could no longer afford to support the war. Simultaneously, South Africa now regarded Rhodesia as a liability. Mugabe represented what the white settlers feared most: an African Marxist who regarded the struggle as an unfinished revolution. He would attempt to replace the capitalist structure of white Rhodesia with an egalitarian, socialist state under Shona domination. In fact, he has proved to be much more conciliatory than his critics were willing to believe. The Marxist aspirations are well expressed by Patel and Bhila, who provide an inside account of the armed struggle. To them the transfer of power in 1980 represents merely a step along the way in the quest for economic transformation, social justice, and a truly egalitarian society.

The chapter by Ajayi and Ekoko explains the British rationale in creating a federal structure in Nigeria that would hold together in precarious balance the northern, western, and eastern regions. The landmark was the 1954 constitution that gave each region its own government and representative institutions within an overall federal structure. Though Nigeria possessed an efficient civil

service and independent judiciary at the time of independence in 1960, the regional divisions, when combined with democratic politics, promoted loyalties based on majority ethnic groups within each region. So intense did the political competition become within and between the regions "that the Nigerian politicians had lost the initiative in determining the character of the post-colonial state."

What were the British motives in devising this system? Ajayi and Ekoko do not rule out the possibility, though the evidence is inconclusive, that the British wished to retain the northern region as a single unit because they regarded the Islamic leaders as an essentially conservative and stabilizing influence on Nigeria as a whole. The British thus acted in self-interest, to perpetuate links with traditional allies. The common aim of all Nigerians was to win independence; but their leaders lost sight of the consequences of aggressive regionalism. It took the crisis of Biafra for them to recognize that the creation of more states before 1960 might have provided a sounder basis for Nigerian federalism and might have mitigated the regional and ethnic rivalries that generated the civil war in 1967. This is harsh criticism of Nigerian as well as British planning preceeding the creation of Nigeria. The authors also acknowledge Nigerian responsibility in the crisis leading up to the Biafran secession. There was a failure of political leadership: "The tragedy of Nigeria's political experience was that . . . it failed to produce a statesman"—at least one capable of dealing with the magnitude of Nigeria's problems.

The chapters by Adu Boahen and Lansiné Kaba are reassessments respectively of Nkrumah and Sékou Touré. Boahen assesses Nkrumah's responsibility for leading Ghana "to the verge of bankruptcy" and the reasons for Ghana's becoming "a pariah among African states." Kaba is interested in the reasons for mass support of a charismatic leader whose regime became increasingly despotic yet inefficient. Both Nkrumah and Sékou Touré attempted to impose total control over the state economy, with disastrous results. These two chapters help to explain the historical problems of the transition to independence and the antecedents of the economic stagnation and structural deterioration that still face both Ghana and Guinea in acute form.

Despite the changes brought about by charismatic leaders after independence, often making the economic situation worse, there are structural continuities across the transfer of power. As Crawford Young argues, during the period of decolonization the "inner nature" of the state remained the same. He concludes that the precipitous independence granted to Zaire in 1960 has obscured the similarity between the old Leopoldian state and the government of Mobutu, both of which may be described as a regime of "orga-

nized pillage." This result was certainly not intended by the Belgians when they left so abruptly. Misguided optimism and disastrous miscalculation help to explain the immediate crisis of Zairian independence. But the causes of the prolonged political crisis cannot be entirely explained by the dereliction of the Belgians.

Zaire shares with many other African states the plundering of the rural communities in order to sustain the ruling elites. In a number of countries—Ghana and Nigeria are discussed in this volume—policies were designed to put the profits of agricultural exports into industrialization without reinvestment in agriculture. In addition, internal food prices were kept low to benefit the politically mobilized groups in the burgeoning urban areas; farmers had little incentive to produce and little capital with which to modernize. The result was declining food production and the gradual diversion of scarce foreign exchange to pay for imports of food. These themes are significant for the volume as a whole. They state lines of inquiry pursued by other authors, notably Boubacar Barry and Bethwell Ogot.

Both Anthony Low and Keith Panter-Brick, in their respective essays on British and French decolonization, are concerned with the timing of independence and the ways in which independence granted to one territory could affect another. Low traces the quick and unexpected ascendancy of the nationalist movements as the explanation of why power was transferred so rapidly and, in his view, so decisively in British Africa. In Panter-Brick's interpretation, nationalist demands pushed France in the same direction even more precipitately. The independence of Morocco and Tunisia, and the Algerian war, affected tropical Africa just as the independence of the Sudan in 1956 probably helped to accelerate independence in other British territories.

What is remarkable is that independence in tropical Africa occurred within a single decade. If one accepts Panter-Brick's analysis, the pattern was the same for both the French and the British. Both wished to preserve as much influence as they could, and neither had a general or systematic plan. It was rather the reverse. Each territory acquired independence on an individual or ad hoc basis, with the British and the French driving hard bargains each time for post-independence economic and defense arrangements. A transfer of power was precisely what the French had wished to avoid. Yet in retrospect the bilateral agreements pounded out by the French and British at the time of independence were remarkably similar. This striking fact challenges the common view that British and French decolonizing patterns diverged. Did the former French territories tend to become "neo-colonies" while the British colonies achieved a greater degree of independence? The perspec-

tive of a quarter of a century suggests that the structural similarities (the colonial state) that exist, and the individual differences among African nations that persist, are both more fundamental than the legacy of a particular colonial regime.

The chapters by Barry and Weiskel address themselves above all to the problem of neo-colonialism. Barry is concerned with the problem of Senegal's economic integration into the world market before independence and the political options since then. He deals comprehensively with the politics of peanuts—the ways in which the commitment to a declining peanut monoculture were tied to the political importance of rural marabouts in supporting Senghor's political party. Domestic politics sustained an increasingly dysfunctional economic structure, originally linked with France, until the deepening political and economic crisis resulted in Senghor's departure from office. Barry's theme, a mixture of sustained criticism and subdued admiration for Leopold Senghor, is that Senegal might, but probably will not, achieve decolonization, in the broadest sense of the term, by cooperation with France. The conclusion is not optimistic: "The grant by France of independence to her former colonies opened the way for neocolonialism, which finds in Senegal its favorite terrain."

Timothy Weiskel finds a similar continuity in the Ivory Coast. He believes that it would be quite wrong to search for the causes of Africa's present-day problems in the events of independence in the 1960s. Whatever mistakes may have been made at that time, or however Felix Houphouët-Boigny might be judged eventually (either as a lackey of imperialism or as a champion of cooperation with France), contemporary circumstances in the Ivory Coast need to be understood as a natural outgrowth of the infrastructure installed during the colonial period and the policies pursued in the 1950s. African coffee and cocoa farmers expanded production dramatically in the postwar era. Nevertheless, the extraordinary urban growth in the Ivory Coast during the past twenty years, combined with timber exploitation and limited investment of alternative productive capabilities, may mean that the nation's economic "miracle" is based upon wasting assets and false assumptions.

The two chapters by Marc Michel on Togo and Richard Joseph on Cameroon provide a study in contrast. Togo, one of the smallest countries in Africa (somewhat larger than Denmark or about the size of West Virginia), and Cameroon, one of the richest in potential for its size because of oil reserves (with a territorial extent after independence comparable to Sweden's or California's), were both trusteeship territories of the United Nations. In neither was the trusteeship system decisive in France's granting of independence, though in both cases, especially in Togo, anti-colonialism at the

United Nations worked to the nationalists' advantage and may have slightly accelerated the pace toward the transfer of power. Michel points out that at no time did violent or radical movements contribute to Togo's independence as they did in Cameroon. But neither was French policy any more enlightened. The Togolese succeeded in part because of their own ingenuity and persistence, which contributed to the French decision early on to grant independence to both Togo and Cameroon in 1960.

Togo represented the danger of further balkanization. Despite the movement for the unification of the Ewe of southern Togo and southeastern Ghana, and despite the incorporation of British Togoland into Ghana, the territory essentially maintained the frontiers of the colonial state. In Michel's judgment, "territorial nationalism" triumphed over "ethnic nationalism." But would the tiny state prove to be viable? The first president of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio, wrote in words that sum up many of the difficulties confronting the smaller African states granted independence in the 1960s:

By breaking up Africa into economic and commercial compartments the colonial powers did their greatest harm. The effect of their policy has been the economic isolation of peoples who live side by side, in some flagrant instances within a few miles of each other, while directing the flow of resources to the metropolitan countries. For example, although I can call Paris from my office telephone here in Lomé, I cannot place a call to Lagos in West Africa only 250 miles away. Again, while it takes a short time to send an airmail letter to Paris, it takes several days for the same letter to reach Accra, a mere 120 miles away.

Other problems are more serious. Trade is the most effective method of creating good will among nations, but in Africa trade barriers are legion. Railroads rarely connect at international boundaries, and where they do, differences in gauges necessitate trans-loading. Highways have been constructed from the coast inland, but very few connect at economic centers of trade. The productive central regions of Togo, Dahomey and Ghana are as remote from each other as if they were on separate continents. These are the problems which we must tackle first.⁹

Olympio believed in self-sufficiency and regional development. He hoped that international aid, not merely from France but from the Western countries collectively, might enable Togo to stand on its own and to become truly "decolonized." He was murdered in 1963. Togo fell under military dic-

9. Sylvanus E. Olympio, "African Problems and the Cold War," in Philip W. Quigg, ed., *Africa: A Foreign Affairs Reader* (New York, 1964), p. 296.

tatorship in 1966, a critical year in Africa's post-colonial history, when it became clear that civilian regimes might not be able to sustain sufficient popular support in order to avoid military takeovers.

Richard Joseph demonstrates how the United Nations' goals of self-determination and independence were at variance with the unitary and centralized aims of the French. He traces the growth of radical nationalism in Cameroon as a reaction to French domination. Here the point of comparison is hardly with Togo, or even Senegal or Ivory Coast, but with Indochina and Algeria. The Cameroon radical leaders combined intense nationalism and a *Marxisant* worldview, which distinguished the anti-colonial movement in Cameroon from most of the rest of French Africa. Independence in 1960 did not end the struggle, which Joseph refers to as a continuing problem of the "unresolved national past." The pre-independence history of Cameroon was among the most tempestuous in tropical Africa.

By studying this exceptional case, Joseph throws light on the reasons for the French abruptly ending their resistance to self-government and independence. The leaders of the anti-colonial movement sought a drastic change in the country's economic structure and administration. Their rhetoric professed social justice and an economy that would benefit the Cameroonians rather than the French capitalists. In view of the widespread popular support, this was indeed a radical challenge to the French colonial system. Only by the French throwing their weight behind the more conservative faction—before it was too late—could they hope to protect their economic investment and to retain political influence with their successors. As a consequence, the support of the government of Ahmadu Ahidjo, in Joseph's judgment, "resulted in the establishment of a highly repressive political and military apparatus during [his] . . . two decades in power." The problems of contemporary Africa thus have their immediate roots in the politics of independence.

In examining the origins of the contemporary problems in the politics and institutions of the colonial state, it becomes luminously clear that, whatever the deleterious legacy of the Europeans, Africa possesses some of the least viable states in the world. These states are weakly integrated into the world market because they are endowed with so few resources worth exploiting. In the last decade, moreover, some of them have suffered ecological trauma in the form of drought and famine. Areas of Africa are victims of natural catastrophe as well as civil war. They suffer also from basic flaws in economic planning. Where have the crucial mistakes been made, and to what extent can they be related to decisions during the period of independence?

There is a remarkable degree of consensus between David Fieldhouse and Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch. The golden dreams of independence have been shattered because tropical Africa has not been able to sustain rates of

growth and patterns of development that might have enabled Africans at least to improve their condition, if not to close the gap with the affluent West. The explanations are complex, but essentially Fieldhouse and Coquery-Vidrovitch agree that one cause can be found in the character of the political systems and the self-seeking of the successor elites. To state a broad conclusion of both authors, the peasantry has been mulcted by the state. Basil Davidson comments on this consensus: "The post-colonial bulk of resources, whether internally or externally derived, has gone into the 'urban areas,' partly for relatively capital-intensive projects of industrial or superstructural investment, partly in support of a continuously growing bureaucracy or 'state classes.'" This is a fatal process. Despite the continued growth of the bureaucracy, most countries lack technically educated personnel. Many parts of Africa are now on the verge of not being able to feed themselves. Could it have been otherwise? Given the grasping nature of most of the "inheritance elites" it is difficult to see how there could have been any alternative. Is rural impoverishment thus an unavoidable outcome of the transfer of power and its consequences?

Bethwell Ogot indicates that Kenya is at least a partial exception to pessimistic economic generalization because the state has successfully managed to stimulate agricultural production. His main purpose, however, is to explain how decolonization in Kenya can be seen as a function of the changing political economy brought about by the postwar decline of white-settler fortunes and the growth of African nationalism, of which Mau Mau must be seen as a manifestation. Like Boahen he insists that the transfer of power has to be understood as the result of African initiative, not British planning, and that in Kenya the timing of decolonization was determined by the challenge of Mau Mau. Independence was achieved, not granted willingly or according to plan.

The same conclusion is upheld in a different way in the chapter by Aquino de Bragança on Mozambique. Unfortunately he did not live to see his work published. He was killed in an air crash over the border from Mozambique in South Africa in October 1986. His death deprives his country of energy, memory, and vision, so that it is a national as well as a personal tragedy. We are indebted to Basil Davidson for helping to prepare the chapter for publication and for adding an introductory note. The theme is that only the long and sustained military initiative by Frelimo (the Mozambiquan liberation movement) can explain the independent status won by Mozambique in 1975. Here the transfer of power was less a transfer than a takeover.

The guerrilla activity against the Portuguese in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique began in 1961, at the time when most of the other African countries had won, or were winning, their independence. In 1961 more than two hundred Portuguese settlers were killed in Angola, one of the highest

known numbers of Europeans killed in African decolonization outside Algeria. The question of general interest is why Portuguese decolonization took so long. Nearly fifteen years elapsed from the beginning of guerrilla activity to the independence of Angola and Mozambique in 1975. From the European point of view it is astonishing that the Portuguese managed to hold out as long as they did. By 1970 the Portuguese had deployed forty thousand troops in Guinea-Bissau, fifty thousand in Angola, and fifty thousand in Mozambique (troop levels that Britain and France began to find intolerable at comparable stages in Palestine, Egypt, Indochina, and Algeria). The Portuguese fought with great tenacity, but the strain on the economy, the sapping of the morale of the army, the skill and fortitude of the insurgents and the external assistance supplied them (provided in Angola primarily by the Soviets and in Mozambique by China) eventually determined the outcome.

In April 1974 the Portuguese officer corps revolted and overthrew the Caetano dictatorship in Lisbon, which was replaced by a regime of the far Left that actively sympathized with the anti-colonial nationalists and a few Marxists in the colonial insurgency. In the other European regimes, above all the British but also the French and even the Belgian, the aim had been a political transfer of power in order to avert the military defeat that now faced the Portuguese. In 1975 power in the Portuguese colonies was not transferred in any meaningful or coherent way: it was seized in conjunction with the revolution in Portugal itself. As Basil Davidson points out in the concluding chapter, the Belgians scuttled even their improvised plans for a transfer of power. They simply abandoned power in the Congo, whereas the Portuguese were forced to acknowledge defeat. The revolution in Portugal now facilitated the aims of the leaders of the liberation movements to restructure their societies along Marxist lines as free as possible from any colonial continuity. According to Samora Machel (the President of Mozambique who was killed in the same air crash as Aquino de Bragança), "We felt, especially, that the struggle to create new structures would fall within the creation of a new mentality."¹⁰

Several of the chapters in this book reflect the Marxist sentiment that a clean break must be made with the colonialist past: there must be a new beginning toward the restructuring of African societies on the basis of economic equality and social justice. It would be unwise for Western students of Africa to underestimate the lingering sense of outrage at the heritage of exploitation and inequality. So extreme has been the alienation in places such as the former Portuguese colonies that it would be unreasonable to expect anything else. Yet there are reasons for hope that Western relations with Africa need not be permanently embittered, even with the most stalwart of

10. Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm* (London, 1972), p. 279.

the Marxist regimes. African societies are pragmatic and inventive; they have generally not repudiated Western institutions that have proved to be useful for their own purposes. One of the insights of Michael Crowder's chapter on Botswana is the way parliamentary democracy and freedom of speech and the press have survived. There is no room for false optimism, either for Botswana or for the rest of Africa, but a conclusion can be drawn in relation to the themes of this book: there is no single path towards stability or a just society. Botswana may be an exceptional case, but this makes it all the more useful as a reminder that decolonization is a process, not an event. Botswana throws into relief the point that parliamentary democracy in the West developed over a period of centuries, not decades. Agostinho Neto, one of the leaders of the liberation movement in Angola, expressed in 1970 the magnitude of the challenge: "We are trying to free and modernize our people by a dual revolution: against their traditional structures which can no longer serve them and against colonial rule."¹¹

The chapter by Sam Nolutshungu raises the question of a transfer of power in South Africa. Examining the attitude of the South African regime toward decolonization in tropical Africa, his thesis is that the external crisis caused by the independence of the Portuguese colonies and Zimbabwe has contributed to an internal crisis for the colonial order within South Africa itself. South Africa in its present form is the result of the same forces that created colonial and post-colonial Africa. It is thus useful to view South Africa as a post-colonial state that has carried many of the features of colonialism into the post-colonial era. Nolutshungu is under no illusion that South Africa will ever willingly offer a meaningful transfer of power, but he concludes that "some form of power sharing with the Africans will eventually become unavoidable." Whether the pace will be quickened will depend to some extent on external pressure, but intervention will probably occur only in the event of a drastic breakdown of authority in South Africa itself. Barring catastrophe, at least the beginning of the transfer of power will probably be an internal process.

Basil Davidson in the concluding chapter points out that the transfer of power in most African countries involved a "transfer of crisis" as well. The question of population growth has to be counted as one of the foremost ingredients in the general crisis. In Algeria and Kenya the rate of population increase is among the highest in the world. Almost all of the African countries have had difficulty in coping with the increase in population and the simultaneous rise in expectations. There are severe limitations on employment. Wealth has become concentrated in the hands of elites, and living standards have continued to fall.

11. *Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. 8, p. 800.

These themes extend beyond the scope of this volume, but one must ask about the broader nature of the transformation of which the transfer of power was a manifestation. Are we witnessing a more or less uniform creation of something that resembles classes throughout the continent, with educated bourgeoisies, wealthy peasants, and a restive proletariat? Perhaps; but we are also seeing, as Basil Davidson reminds us, an over-bureaucratized state sucking wealth from the countryside to feed its managers and beneficiaries. Is what is occurring similar to the process of nation building in Europe? Is it Western Europe with a much lesser degree of capital formation? Or is it closer to the creation of the socialist states of Eastern Europe? In any event, many of these latter-day nation builders are just as absolute in their quest for state authority as their European forerunners. One of the ironies revealed by a study of the transfer of power is that most of the post-colonial states—whether Marxist, Islamic, neutral, or Western in their orientation—are just as authoritarian as their alien predecessors.

We cannot yet assess the *longue durée* of the nation-state in Africa. Whereas the nation builders in Europe aimed to replace the older empires with nations that represented some combination of cultural, linguistic, and patriotic unity, the African successors to the European administrative units are building nations based on new identities defined by the boundaries of the colonial state. The loyalties remain in many instances more ethnic or religious than national. Anti-colonialism was more of a unifying force than is nationalism. The euphemism of “ethnicity” ought not to disguise the danger of newly mobilized tribalism in some parts of Africa.¹² Dictatorships based on tribal loyalties may well represent a step backward, if it is assumed that the imported concept of the nation-state represents progress.¹³

At the time of the transfer of power, in the late 1950s through the 1970s, the British and the French, at least, handed over an administrative apparatus, a judiciary, and an educational system. These were imperfect and fragile creations, designed for European as well as African purposes. Nevertheless, they are vital parts of any modern state, in Africa as elsewhere. The forms that these European legacies will ultimately take are not yet apparent. What has become clear is that the time of the transfer of power marked a significant juncture in the Africans’ management of their own affairs. Political power was transferred, though in the economy the transition is not yet complete and may never be. As Basil Davidson points out, ultimately it is up to

12. See John Dunn, ed., *West African States: Failure and Promise* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 20–21.

13. See Ali Mazrui, “Africa Entrapped: Between the Protestant Ethic and the Legacy of Westphalia,” in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds., *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford, 1984).

the Africans themselves, as best they can, to secure and preserve their own freedom.

In the preparation of the volume, David Gardinier and Anthony Kirk-Greene have continued their labors in providing bibliographical essays and lists. No one has worked harder than they to ensure the usefulness of the book. We are confident that the invaluable bibliographical aids will be welcomed now as they have been in the past. They enhance the utility of the volume as a work of reference.

We mention last a question of historical method. Among the authors Marc Michel is probably the first historian systematically to use the archival resources of both the French and British governments in order to write an account that is unlikely to be challenged, on grounds of evidence, by the opening of future records in ten, thirty, fifty years' time. His chapter is not alone in this regard, but it comes perhaps closest to a model of historical research by utilizing extensive archival sources. Should the publication of the book have been delayed until comparable research could be undertaken for other chapters? Some archival records are now available, with privileged access, up to the late 1950s and even the early 1960s. Others, such as the Belgian records on the Congo, will not be accessible until after the turn of the century, and still others, South African and those of many African governments, may never be opened. None of the records in the Portuguese national archives for the decolonization period are accessible. If one were to restrict historical investigation until all documentation is available, the history of Africa's independence might never be written at all. We feel that a quarter of a century after the main events of African independence is an appropriate time for reassessment. The chapters in this book are the result of long preparation, extensive debate, and considerable reflection about the significance of the end of the European era in Africa. They represent a diversity of views and angles of vision, from the European perspective on the reasons for the end of empire, to the African view of the consequences of decolonization. We are aware of the responsibility, by publishing a major work while the subject is still in the formative stage of historical analysis, of suggesting lines of research for the future. Here we hope we succeed.

The book brings to a conclusion the quartet begun with Yale University Press's publication of *Britain and Germany in Africa* in 1965. Over more than twenty years, we have seen several changes in perspective on the process of decolonization. Beginning with a rather heady and myopic optimism in the early 1960s, assessments now are cautious, pessimistic, and even disconsolate. Civil wars in the Sudan, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Chad, and the western Sahara have dragged on for years, creating misery and mi-

gration on a massive scale. Famine has struck in both the Sahel and the Horn. Civil society has been reduced from public trust to private plunder in Ghana, Nigeria, and Zaire. In too many African countries there has been imprisonment, torture, and execution. Food and refugee relief has mitigated suffering without improving long-range solutions. New diseases (such as AIDS) and new absolutisms (such as Islamic fundamentalism) seem to be spreading, while many regimes continue to harass their most able professionals into living abroad. Yet there may still be cause for guarded optimism. Some African leaders, having experienced and survived civil war and social disintegration, are calling for a reinvigoration of civil society and a rethinking of fundamental issues. We believe that the cumulative lesson of these volumes is that the process of decolonization is lengthy, painful, and discontinuous. Only now are we beginning to discern its full dimensions, to which we hope these volumes remain a useful guide.

Prosser Gifford
Wm. Roger Louis



1. *The Colonial State and Post-Colonial Crisis*

CRAWFORD YOUNG

Few would dispute the proposition that the African state today is beset with a profound crisis: political, economic, and social. Countries that a few years ago were regarded as hopeful experiments in development are devastated—though not all states were afflicted in equal measure. Those with small populations and high-value minerals (such as Gabon and Libya), and with unusual stability and cautious husbanding of resources (like Botswana, Burundi since 1972, Malawi, and Algeria), are in less parlous condition. But the overall prognosis is disheartening.

The contemporary crisis of the African state has several dimensions. In part, it lies in the fraying relationship between the state and civil society. Growing disillusionment with the performance of the state and cynicism about the ruling groups lead, in many countries, to apathy and detachment. Suddenly the concept of the uncaptured peasantry captures the sociological imagination; whatever its accuracy, this notion occurred to no one two decades ago.¹ Important segments of civil society derive their livelihood from the world of the *magendo*, or underground economy, and novel social categories germinate within this occult universe;² large and increasing spheres of political economy fall outside the public realm where state and civil society are joined. Even within the public realm it becomes more apparent that formulas of authoritarian incorporation, to bring civil society within a framework of “conforming participation,” are losing their credibility; as Bayart suggests,

1. See Goran Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania* (Berkeley, 1980).

2. Vwakyanakazi Mukohya, “Traders in Butembo,” Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1982; Nelson Kasfir, “State, Magendo, and Class Formation in Uganda,” in Kasfir, ed., *State and Class in Africa* (London, 1984), pp. 84–103.

"The projects of the power-holders have been partially undermined, if not completely ruined," by the subtle modes of popular action: evasion, dissimulation, and ridicule.³

Causes of the disarray of the post-colonial African state are many. Some are attributable to inexplicably angered fates, who visited punishing droughts on large stretches of the continent in the 1970s and 1980s. Some arise from inherent intractabilities of resource endowment, particularly for the poorest of the states: limited and unreliable rainfall and dubious soil fertility, compounded by the world's highest population growth (almost 3 percent annually) contribute to ecological degradation. The international environment has been hostile. Aid levels have been stingy, and their distribution heavily influenced by the global strategic objectives of the superpowers, for whom Africa is one more arena of competitive encounter. International markets for major African commodities have been unfavorable in most recent years. Lenders share responsibility with the African borrowers for the excessive indebtedness of many countries.

In addition to these factors, some illumination of the current distress can, we believe, be obtained by a retrospective examination of the colonial state in Africa. We make no claim that the political legacy of the colonial state can stand as the central source of any explanation. But we are persuaded that deeply embedded in the contemporary state are a number of characteristics and behavioral dispositions that originate in the colonial era, as do problems inherent to its adaptation to post-colonial rule.

Such an inquest must go beyond the immediate circumstances of transfer of power. The origins of the present crisis lie, in part, in characteristics of the colonial state that must be traced back to the early stages of its construction. Our analysis will focus upon the case of Zaire.⁴ At first glance, Zaire may seem like a unique instance of decolonization, standing out in its abruptness and the scale of the immediate dislocations. As time has gone by, however, the significance of those aspects of power transfer that were exceptional diminishes, and the configuration of post-colonial power bears more resemblance to patterns in many other African states. To be sure, many tendencies observable in the majority of post-colonial African states exist in exaggerated, even caricatural, form in Zaire. Looking back, the same observation applies to the colonial state

3. Jean-François Bayart, "L'hommage à la reine: les modes d'action politique en situations autoritaires," workshop on "The Entry of Socially Subordinate Groups into the Political Arena," University of Salzburg, April 1984.

4. The name of the state was changed from "Congo" (or "Congo-Kinshasa") to Zaire in 1971. Between 1966 and 1971, place names of European resonance were also changed. We shall use "Belgian Congo" for the colonial state, "Zaire" for the post-colonial state, and the present place names for towns and administrative units, with their former names in parentheses on first encounter.

fashioned by Leopold II and the Belgians. Precisely because of its excesses, Zaire can serve as an illuminating case study of behavioral patterns that we believe are general to the colonial and post-colonial state.

We place the state at the center of our analysis, which necessitates a brief statement of our usage of this many-splendored concept.⁵ The notion of state includes, to begin with, several defining characteristics that demarcate its modern forms. First, a state has territoriality. For the modern state, this is a precisely demarcated domain, within whose boundaries the claim to exclusive ultimate authority is asserted. Second, a state is invested with sovereignty. This potent jural weapon, forged by the philosophers of absolutism, equips the state with a doctrine of inherent, absolute, indivisible, and unlimited power and authority, placing at its disposition the land, resources, and population of the territory.⁶ Third, a state possesses nationality. This warm vibrant concept vests the state with a moral personality. Fourth, the state is a partici-

5. We find particularly useful in conceptualization of "state" Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, 1973); Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State* (Stanford, 1978); Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States* (Boulder, 1977); Perry Anderson, *The Lineages of the Absolute State, 1450–1725* (London, 1974); Heinz Lubasz, ed., *The Development of the Modern State* (New York, 1964); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge, England, 1979); Kenneth H. F. Dyson, *The State Tradition in Western Europe* (New York, 1980); Eric A. Nordlinger, *On the Autonomy of the Democratic State* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); "The State," *Daedalus*, 18, 4 (Fall 1979); Alexandre Passerin d'Entreves, *The Notion of the State* (Oxford, 1967); Robert Fossaert, *Les états* (Paris, 1981); Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism: Power, Property and the State* (Berkeley, 1981); Henri Lefebvre, *De l'état* (Paris, 1976); Nicos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism* (London, 1978); Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (London, 1969); Bob Jessop, *The Capitalist State: Marxist Theories and Methods* (New York, 1982).

6. The history of this crucial doctrine is traced by F. H. Hinsley, *Sovereignty* (London, 1966); Bertrand de Jouvenel, *Sovereignty: An Inquiry into the Political Good* (Cambridge, England, 1957).

With specific regard to the African colonial state, sources that have been especially valuable in conceptual terms include Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," *New Left Review* 23 (July–Aug. 1972): 39–81; John Lonsdale, "States and Social Processes in Africa: A Historiographical Survey," *African Studies Review* 24, 2/3 (June–Sept. 1981): 139–225; John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, "Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895–1914," *Journal of African History* 20, 4 (1979): 487–505; Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, "Crises of Accumulation, Coercion, and the Colonial State: The Development of the Labor Control System in Kenya, 1919–1929," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14, 1 (1980): 55–81; Jack Wayne, "Structural Contradictions of the Colonial State: The Case of Tanganyika in the Early Years," University of Toronto, department of sociology, 1981; Peter Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, 1 (1975): 91–112; Beverly Grier, "Underdevelopment, Modes of Production and the State in Colonial Ghana," *African Studies Review* 24, 1 (Mar. 1981): 21–48; John S. Saul, *State and Revolution in Eastern Africa* (New York, 1979); Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley, 1981); Stanley B. Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development* (New Haven, 1980); Goran Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania*:

pant in a global system of juridically equivalent units, the “anarchical society” of the international order. The absence of binding authority within this system and the active pursuit of self-defined “national interest,” in competition and potential conflict with other units, by all states define the international system. Fifth, the state is a set of institutions of rule. In everyday understandings of the state, its visibility as “government” is no doubt its most readily perceived aspect. Sixth, the state is a legal system. Its commands are codified into uniform, predictable, and impersonal rules. Finally, the state is an idea, deeply implanted in the minds of its citizens and officials, as something abstract yet personal, which is much more than the simple sum of its institutions of governance: thus its generally diffused icons, legitimating myths, a theory of its origins, and normative doctrines relating to its operation and ultimate aims.

In this analysis, particular stress is placed upon the state as a historical actor, a collective agent of macropolitical process. In this perspective, a grasp of the “reason of state” that shapes its action is crucial. These behavioral imperatives can be usefully summarized under five headings: hegemony, security, autonomy, legitimation, and revenue. Taken cumulatively, these elements constitute the reason of state embedded in the “official mind” of the human agents that staff its institutions. We do not wish to imply that these factors constitute some mechanical law of determination. States as abstractions cannot act; only the skilled human beings who staff its institutions can do so. Possessed of volition, yet as state agents operating within the womb of the reason of state, human actors have some latitude in interpretation of its dictates, and are affected by individual idiosyncracies. But the broad parameters governing state behavior supplied by these imperatives help give history its patterned regularities and structural forms.

States seek hegemony over territory that they rule. The modern state, Weber observed, “is a compulsory association which organizes domination.”⁷ States will not tolerate resistance to the supremacy of their laws nor accept challenge to their ultimate authority over territory or populace. They respond to perceived threats to their security, whether from the international arena or their civil society. They accumulate and store power resources, arming them-

Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry (Berkeley, 1980); Timothy C. Weiskel, *French Colonial Rule and the Baule Peoples: Resistance and Collaboration, 1889–1911* (Oxford, 1980); Jean-Francois Bayart, *L'état au Cameroun* (Paris, 1979); Jeremy White, *Central Administration in Nigeria, 1914–1948* (Dublin, 1981); Robin Bidwell, *Morocco under Colonial Rule* (London, 1973); Crawford Young, “Ethnicity and the Colonial and Post-Colonial State in Africa,” in Paul Brass, ed., *Ethnic Groups and the State* (London, 1985): 57–93.

7. Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” repr. in H. C. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber* (New York, 1958), p. 82.

selves as a function of self-calculated quantum of security. Resource limitations, and possibly consent of civil society, constrain the response to the security imperative, but states have an innate tendency to err on the side of “safety.”

States pursue the goal of maximum feasible autonomy. The doctrine of sovereignty, in its external dimension, prescribes independence as the fundamental norm of true statehood, however impossible its full attainment. State autonomy also has an internal dimension; states represent themselves as pursuing a “national” or “public” interest distinct from those of any segment of civil society, or even the sum of its parts.

States need legitimation for the effective exercise of authority and economic accumulation of power. States may, in the Weberian phrase, be defined by the monopoly of legitimate use of coercion, but force cannot be constantly applied. Habitual acquiescence to state authority permits parsimony in the employment of coercion.

Perhaps most fundamental of all is the state drive to assure its revenue base. All of the other imperatives require resources to meet. From the birth of the modern state, the relentless search for money has been a constant theme of statecraft and the pivot for a ceaseless struggle with a civil society anxious to limit state extraction. The primacy of the revenue imperative is an axiom of reason of state.⁸

The colonial state, as a dependent appendage of the set of European states who participated in the partition of Africa, has a number of particularities that require notice. Its territoriality was ambiguous. The introduction of sharply defined frontiers—when it was finally accomplished on the ground, two or three decades after the diplomatic settlements were reached—was a dramatic change from most pre-colonial arrangements. But the boundaries that assumed some degree of significance were those demarcating the domains of different colonial powers, not those separating the different territories into which an imperial state subdivided its possessions. Within contiguous zones ruled by a single power there was generally free movement of goods and persons. Paradoxically, the territorial legacy has proved to be one of the most enduring impacts of colonial rule. As anti-colonial struggle gathered momentum, it necessarily adopted as the unit of self-determination the colonial territory. As a new ruling class, the nationalist leadership sought legitimation and security through sanctifying their territory as embodying nationality; the notion that territorial integrity is identified with the extant state system is a basic premise of the emerging code of African international law, entrenched in the Organization of African Unity (OAU) charter.

8. See the seminal study of Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley, 1981).

Sovereignty for the colonial state was exercised by the imperial occupant. For the most part, it was held to originate in conquest (occasionally treaty), with European rule imposed upon lands lacking international standing as sovereign entities. Even treaty-based protectorates laid claim to full sovereign prerogatives; by 1895 British law officers had ruled that “the exercise of a protectorate in an uncivilized country imported the right to assume whatever jurisdiction over all persons may be needed for its effectual exercise.”⁹ The plenitude of the sovereignty doctrine applied by colonizers to their African domains was important in supplying ideological justification of a number of the sweeping measures adopted, such as applying the axiomatic derivative of sovereignty that the state holds ultimate proprietary rights over land.

The colonial state was conceded a derivative territorial personality, but emphatically not a national one. The subject populations of Africa were invited to share a subordinated affective tie to the imperial center. Until relatively late in the colonial game, the proposition that there was a Nigerian, Algerian, or Congolese “nation” would have been treated as utterly ludicrous. Belgian state doctrine, for example, insisted upon the separateness of the colony, but its very title of “Belgian Congo” was emblematic of the suffusion of a Belgian overlay into its territorial identity.

The centrality of law in metropolitan state ideologies required the creation of a legal realm in the colonial state. As a legal order, however, the colonial state was a hybrid construction. The Belgians went furthest in creating a comprehensive constitution for their colony by parliamentary enactment in 1908 (the *Charte Coloniale*). While insisting upon the ascendancy of its law, the colonial state did not (and could not) enforce a comprehensive legal monopoly. The colonial legal order confined its demands for exclusivity to economic and social spheres covering the activity of the external estate of Europeans and other immigrants, and to criminal offenses that were deemed, directly or indirectly, to affect the colonial peace. Matters civil or criminal that had no impact on the colonial realm, concerning solely the subject populace, could be treated in African jurisdictions by customary law. In these fields the ultimate hegemony of the colonial state could be enforced by tutelage and monitoring of the African courts, whose verdicts were subject to review, and whose personnel subject to screening by the colonial authority.

At the time of the creation of the African colonial state, the world state system was perhaps more Europe centered than at any other point in modern history. As appendage of empire, the colonial state thus had no distinctive external interests except as imperial accessories. The effortless presumption

9. Henry S. Wilson, *The Imperial Experience in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1870* (Minneapolis, 1977), p. 84.

of African assimilation of an empire interest by grace of conquest was reflected in intriguing ways. In Belgium, the polemics of Congo reform groups directed at the atrocities of Leopoldian rule in the Congo Free State period were termed "anti-Congolese campaigns"; such a characterization reveals the inarticulate premise that "Congo" simply referred to Belgian rule through the personal sovereignty of its king. African conscripts were freely employed in both world wars, not only in German territories in Africa during World War I but also in such distant theaters as Burma, the Middle East, and Europe. In the cases of France and Belgium, the African territories were used during the second war as refuges of metropolitan sovereignty placed in doubt by the German occupation of Europe.

In the formative years particularly, the *telos* of the colonial state was altogether externally directed. Justification for colonial rule had to be supplied to metropolitan civil society and to the European concert of states. The law of force and necessity was sufficient legitimation for the subjugated African societies. Until imperialism became fully assimilated into the metropolitan state ideology at home, officialdom and influential segments of public opinion required reassurance of the advantages to be derived from overseas estates and guarantees that these would not be offset by inconvenient costs. Because of the competitive nature of the African partition, and lingering uncertainties into the early twentieth century as to the permanence of the initial settlements, imperial purpose had also to be clothed in claims of benefits accruing to subjugated populations; abolition of slavery was particularly salient in the early arguments, with the 1890 Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference a landmark in the diplomacy of African partition. Vivifying commerce and opportunities for uplifting Christian conversion were other components of initial colonial-state ideology, which appealed to significant metropolitan groups interested in African expansion.

In sum, the colony as subspecies of state had several distinctive characteristics. It was a dependent appendage of an externally located sovereignty, alien to its core. Its inner logic was shaped by the vocation of domination. The very success of its hegemonic project constituted a civil society that over time was bound to reject its legitimacy.

The African colonial state may be classified in the broader category of colonial states generally in most of these respects, but there are some points of distinctiveness that deserve brief notice. First, for the most part, the colonial state elsewhere could superpose itself on existing state structures of substantial scope and on institutions of social power long accustomed to the extraction of revenue from the land. Potent structures of intermediation and fiscal collection were in place, which with force and diplomacy might be incorporated into the colonial state. Second, conquest in Africa was much more competitive

than in any other major region. The scramble was concentrated, intense, and in many areas involved multiple competitors for given territory.

Third, the colonial state-building venture in Africa included in most places a far more comprehensive cultural project than was usual in Asia or the Middle East (although the New World was comparable). Racialist ideas were much more ideologically elaborated than they had been in earlier centuries at the time of African colonial occupation. The European ruling class had both a more pronounced conviction of its own cultural, biological, and technological superiority and a more systematically negative view of the Africans.¹⁰ Fourth, colonial expansion in Africa occurred at a historical moment when European states were far more comprehensive and ramified than had been the case in earlier centuries. The late nineteenth-century European states, with their professionalized bureaucracies, vastly greater resources, and permanent military forces equipped with imposing weapons, had doctrines concerning the scope and range of state action that went well beyond those of an earlier age.

BELGIAN CONGO: MODEL OF THE AFRICAN COLONIAL STATE

We now turn to the Belgian Congo, as paradigmatic of the African colonial state. For analytical economy, we shall recapitulate its evolution in a threefold periodization: construction (up to 1914), institutionalization (World War I to II), and decolonization (1945–1960). To decode the internal logic that shaped its growth, we make use of the five components of the reason of state considered earlier: hegemony, security, autonomy, legitimation, and revenue. Initially the hegemony imperative was the key factor, given particular urgency both by the competitive intensity of the scramble and by the specific innovation of the doctrine of effective occupation. This principle was adopted at the 1884–1885 Berlin Congress summoned to make partition possible without triggering a European war. The concept was not entirely novel: it had been used since the sixteenth century by the French, British, and others to challenge the more exorbitant Spanish claims to Western Hemisphere dominion. But the Berlin accord elevated this notion to new standing as international law of colonial conquest. “Effective occupation” required that, within a reasonable period of time, a colonizer had to validate his claim to an imperial title over African territory by establishing the rudimentary infrastructure of hegemonic institutions: military outposts, particularly around the periphery, and a modest network of administrative centers. The matter was urgent; boundaries were not necessarily definitive and were in any case poorly de-

10. Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action* (Madison, 1964); William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Responses to Blacks, 1530–1880* (Bloomington, 1980).

fined on the ground. Rival predators had ample opportunity to take advantage of the slightest lethargy or procrastination in establishing effective occupation.

The catalyst in transforming the vast territory that became the Belgian Congo into a colonial space was Leopold II, who had long embraced the secret conviction, not shared by his subjects, that an imperial future was essential for Belgium. In the decade preceding the Berlin Congress, under the cover of geographical research and commerce, a shadowy presence on the ground provided Leopold with a slender but indispensable basis for achieving, through masterful maneuver in the diplomacy of partition, the international laying on of hands that bestowed living sovereignty upon his African domains. The Congress formalized the anointment; the Congo Free State, under the personal and absolute sovereignty of King Leopold, was proclaimed on 1 July 1885. The effective-occupation doctrine also imposed the urgent obligation of erecting at least the semblance of an apparatus of domination.

The hegemonic mission was enormous. The territorial domain of the new colonial state was only loosely defined, and in Leopold's own imagination stretched to the upper Zambezi, Lake Victoria, the Upper Nile, even the Red Sea. In 1885, the state had on the ground only a handful of European agents, a small number of West African and Zanzibari soldiers, and a couple of dozen outposts along the Zaire River up to Kisangani (Stanleyville). To make matters worse, the revenue potential of the Leopoldian estates was constrained by the pledge to free trade that was a condition for European recognition, and by lack of access to the Belgian state treasury.

The military instrument indispensable for minimal hegemony was soon assembled. It made use of the well-established colonial pattern, pioneered in India, of building a substantial force of indigenous conscripts, whose cost was no more than the most meager subsistence provided by foraging, around a core of European military professionals who manned the officer and noncommissioned ranks. Within a decade of the creation of the colonial state, an army of ten thousand had been erected.¹¹ In spite of major mutinies in 1895, 1897, and 1900, this force, augmented by allied African irregulars, had by the turn of the century established a precarious presence in a string of outposts, especially around the periphery, which could at least maintain themselves against liquidation by local societies and preempt beachheads by colonial competitors. By 1900, there were 183 state outposts; European agents, civil and military, numbered fifteen hundred in 1906.

The alien superstructure by no means sufficed for the construction of hegemony. The Leopoldian agents swiftly recognized that Congolese inter-

11. L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, *The Rulers of Belgian Africa, 1884-1914* (Princeton, 1979), pp. 52-84. F. Flament, *La force publique de se naissance à 1914* (Brussels, 1952).

mediaries were indispensable; an 1891 decree authorized the incorporation of Congolese rulers into the state machinery. The philosophy of intermediated hegemony was well stated by Leopold in 1900:

. . . the government sought to utilize their [Congolese] own social and political organization to habituate them to the yoke of authority. It was a matter of finding a flexible, and so to speak popular intermediary, which could serve as a connective link between whites and natives, to make them accept the orders of the state and who would, furthermore, through his official investiture, acquire sufficient influence over the populations to maintain their obedience.¹²

The ramifying apparatus of hegemony and the numerous military campaigns to ensure it were expensive. To complicate matters, the supply of its far-flung if skeletal infrastructure forced upon it a substantial debt burden. Immediate construction of a railroad from the seaport of Matadi around the rapids of the lower Congo River was indispensable. Without the railroad, in the lapidary phrase of Leopold's agent Henry Stanley, "the Congo is not worth a penny." Part of the cost was financed by allocation of extensive concessions to private capital; when this proved insufficient, loans from the Belgian state were needed. Porterage of the supplies needed for occupation, and of the ivory and rubber for export, required during the 1890s the coerced mobilization of fifty thousand men annually, a flow of labor that was difficult to mobilize. Immediate sources of revenue were crucial.

One way or another, all revenue trails led to a single ultimate source: African labor. The physical commodities from which state returns would be based were, in the first two decades, only two: ivory and wild rubber. The state had to expropriate these physical products and the labor required to obtain them. The sovereign attribute of taxation was one valuable instrument, levied in labor or in kind, fixed at a level that required men in villages within reach of the state or its delegates to spend the greater part of their time in gathering rubber. The state apparatus was converted into productive machinery: officials were evaluated by produce extracted and often remunerated by commission. Military sentinels were posted in villages, with a mandate to make unrestricted use of force to meet delivery norms. Large amounts of labor also needed to be conscripted for virtually unremunerated service in construction, porterage, and the military. The quanta of force required to assure these purposes in turn raised the costs of hegemony.

The burden of hegemony was intensified by Leopold's expectation that he was constructing not just a domain of personal sovereignty but a capitalist

12. J. Magotte, *Les circonscriptions indigènes* (La Louvière, 1952), p. 47.

enterprise intended to return him a profit. Much of this derived from his engrossing as Crown Domain one-eighth of the territory in 1896; this yielded a profit of seventy-one million francs, a sum usefully compared to the total colonial state budget in 1906 of thirty-six million francs. Leopold was not alone in his extortion: some twenty-seven million hectares were delegated at this time to concessionary companies, who were supposed to commit the capital necessary for hegemonic services in the zones they ruled, in return for the right to exploit the areas and their inhabitants in commercial fashion, as a mercantile monopoly. In reality, they brought little capital (a mere £8,000 for the Anglo-Belgian India Rubber Company, the most notorious), but instituted a reign of terror and atrocities that led to the so-called red-rubber revelations of the Congo reform campaign and eventually to Belgian assumption of sovereignty.¹³

The revenue drive compelled the Leopoldian state swiftly to shed one major inhibition on its sovereign authority, the free-trade commitment imposed at the Berlin Congress as a condition for recognition. This was accomplished by imposing a state monopoly on the sole commodities of export value, ivory and rubber. Stengers cites the apt summation of a contemporary critic, who described the Leopoldian free-trade regime as a two-clause treaty: "Article 1: Trade is entirely free. Article 2: There is nothing to buy or sell."¹⁴

In the construction phase of the colonial state the doctrine of sovereignty, harnessed to the revenue imperative, was thus a license for the confiscation of the entire resources of the territory. On the day of the founding of the Leopoldian state, 1 July 1885, a decree was issued laying claim for the state upon the totality of "vacant land". While there was little if any land to which some Congolese community did not believe it had rights of use and therefore proprietary claims, the radical jurisprudence of European state theory recognized African rights only over lands actually occupied and used, or less than 1 percent of the land surface. The concept was reformed in 1906, to concede communities proprietary claims to three times the area they immediately tilled; even this definition left 97 percent for the state. When we add to this the regalian rights to expropriate African labor by taxation and conscription, we can perceive the sweeping scope of the doctrine of sovereignty, joined to the requirements of hegemony and revenue.

Profoundly revealing of the nature of the colonial state as it emerged in the construction phase was the lexical designation by which it came to be popularly known: "Bula Matari." This label was initially applied to Stanley, in-

13. Robert Harms, "Abir: The Rise and Fall of a Rubber Empire," M. A. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1973; Gann and Duignan, *The Rulers of Belgian Africa*, pp. 116–40.

14. Jean Stengers, "The Congo Free State and the Belgian Congo," in L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, eds., *Colonialism in Africa 1970–1960* (Cambridge, England, 1969), vol. 1, p. 266.

spired by his success in transporting dismantled steamers on human backs over the difficult terrain lying between the Pool and the coastal headquarters of Vivi in 1879–1880. This Kikongo term, meaning literally “he who breaks rocks,” by metaphorical transformation embodied the image of crushing, overwhelming force. “Bula Matari” soon came to be applied to the state in general and to the European agents who exercised its hegemony. As Zairian scholar N’Kanza later expressed it, “For all Bakongo the name of Bula Mata(r)i signified terror.”¹⁵

Thus, militarily, politically, and economically, the architects of the colonial state responded to the hegemony imperative by rapid construction of an apparatus of domination. While this vast task could not be accomplished overnight, overall it went forward with remarkable speed—at a pace far more rapid than colonial state building in any other part of the world. By the time of World War I, the basic framework had been established. Some zones were not brought under full control until the 1920s (Kivu region), but lines of communication were assured, boundaries secured. The colonial hegemony had assumed its basic form. The first phase of colonial state construction closed with the settled conviction of its builders that their hegemony was seated for the indefinite future. Challenges to its legitimacy in the metropole had died down. Its proconsuls in the field were certain of the permanency of their role.

The second stage in the development of the African colonial state, during the interwar period, may be characterized as institutionalization. The basic foundations had been laid; the initial crises of hegemony and revenue had been overcome. The colonial state was digging itself in for the *longue durée*. On its roster of postwar objectives were such matters as perfection of its institutions, rationalization of its machinery, and professionalization of its cadre of officials. The most significant evolution came within its hegemonic framework, revenue base, and legitimating ideology, the three aspects we shall concentrate on.

In this second stage, the era of constant application of brute force to achieve authority was by and large over. The local Belgian administrators, “kings of the bush,” enjoyed an infrequently challenged ascendancy. Harsh measures were often associated with the state’s organization of its economic domain: meeting the voracious labor requirements of the expanding corporate sector; organizing peasant agriculture to serve the needs of the colonial state. But routinization of hegemony had occurred. The pattern of domination gained the tacit acceptance bred by familiarity and the absence of an apparent alternative.

15. N’Kanza Lusibu Zala, “The Social Origins of Political Underdevelopment in the Belgian Congo (Zaire),” Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1976, pp. 232–234.

The self-confident colonial services became much more professionalized. Belgium had created a colonial institute for the training of prospective civil servants. The diverse assortment of military officers, adventure seekers, and occasional psychopaths who mingled with the early generation of proconsuls were phased out in favor of an earnest cohort of professional functionaries schooled for their service. Improving medical conditions, better communications, and more attractive material circumstances made colonial careers inviting, which they were not before 1914. The mortality rate for European state agents was 15 percent in 1890, 5 percent in 1905, and 1 percent in 1920.¹⁶ Specialized technical services began to be added to the basic infrastructure of authority.

The intermediary structure of rule at the chieftaincy level was rationalized. Theories of administration were elaborated by the new practitioners of colonial science, many influenced by Lord Lugard and the ideology of indirect rule. After exhaustive study, the Belgians gave definitive cast to their local administrative system in the decree of 5 December 1933. The rationalizing mood is well conveyed in the accompanying legal note explicating the decree, which provided for approximately one thousand indigenous circumscriptions of roughly uniform scale:

While respecting traditional administration, the legislator wanted to establish a single administrative system: he made of the chieftaincy (or sector) the lowest echelon of the administrative organization, and the chief a functionary integrated into the system without prejudice to his traditional role.¹⁷

This level of administration too was subjected to the first steps toward professionalization. Literate skills and competence began to be factors in nomination, as did ancestry, customary credentials, and pliability to colonial authority.

There were also significant shifts in the nature of colonial state ideology during these years. There was no longer a need to justify preservation of colonial domains at home, although they had been bitterly debated in the 1906–1908 period, when the Belgian Parliament agreed to “reprise.” By the 1920s, inherent proprietary impulses of the metropolitan state to preserve its territorial heritage were dominant. Now that the existence of African empire was taken for granted, new legitimating doctrines emerged as to its purposes. Contributing to the context for these novel ingredients in colonial state ideology was a heightened awareness of the potential value of Belgium’s vast

16. Gann and Duignan, *The Rulers of Belgian Africa*, p. 107.

17. Pierre Piron and Jacques Devos, *Codes et lois du Congo Belge*, 8th ed. (Brussels, 1960), vol. 2, p. 211.

African domain, as the basic infrastructure of capital installations and supportive communication routes was in place for the swift expansion of mineral output.

The concept of "development" first became a consciously articulated part of state ideology from these antecedents. Notions of "good government" likewise became more explicitly woven into the legitimating fabric of colonial state doctrine. Rational, prudent management of the colonial estates by a professional cadre of administrators, applying increasingly scientific methods to their development and providing impartial adjudication of conflicts: these were the themes of the self-composed encomium to colonial rule, *Dominer pour servir*,¹⁸ as Belgium's greatest proconsul, Pierre Ryckmans, entitled his valedictory remarks. A corollary theme was "trusteeship" as vindication of hegemony. The League of Nations Covenant spoke of the "sacred trust of civilization," applicable to mandatory states but reflecting a broader European trend in legitimating ideology, to supply services of governance for "peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world."

This reformulated doctrine of state was still primarily directed toward the metropolitan and external audience, but no longer exclusively so. The distant sense of possible future stirrings in civil society began to percolate into the official consciousness. There began to emerge out of colonial encounter new social categories not easily absorbed into the intermediary structures of subordination: *évolués*, a permanent urban population. A distinguished Belgian colonial magistrate, Paul Salkin, penned a gloomy fantasy forecasting that a century hence the colonial edifice would crumble before the assaults of fanatical Garveyite mobs.¹⁹

In the implementation of its new doctrines of development, good government, and trusteeship, the action in the welfare sphere of the colonial state remained relatively circumscribed. Its revenue flow sufficed to finance its infrastructure of hegemony, but there was little left over for large-scale action as a dispenser of welfare—and, indeed, welfare-state doctrine was not yet ascendant in the metropolitan states. Most of the modest school infrastructure owed its existence to the missionary societies. Only the seminaries provided post-primary instruction.

Some significant efforts did begin in the health field, again with shared responsibilities with missions and in some areas corporations. Here the revenue imperative supplied part of the energizing force. African labor was the lynchpin of the system, and the belief grew that it was not only scarce but

18. Pierre Ryckmans, *Dominer pour servir* (Brussels, 1948).

19. Paul Salkin, *L'Afrique Centrale dans cent ans* (Paris, 1926).

dwindling. Epidemics of sleeping sickness, measles, smallpox and other maladies had taken a heavy toll. There was an apprehension among some Belgians in the 1920s that the Belgian Congo population had fallen by as much as half since the days of Stanley's exploration. There might be no Africans left to build railways, mine copper, grow cotton—and pay taxes; by the mid-1920s, the Belgian Congo faced an acute labor shortage. The beginning of a public health program was a necessity for the colonial state, for reasons of revenue as well as trusteeship.

With the destruction of its initial fiscal base of ivory and wild rubber collected by expropriated African labor, the colonial state was forced into a new strategy of accumulation, which began to take shape before World War I but bore fruit in the era of institutionalization. The state, for its longer-term consolidation and survival, needed to attract large Belgian capital, to develop the substantial ore bodies already identified (copper in the southeast, diamonds in Kasai, tin in the east, gold in the northeast), introduce plantation agriculture, especially for oil palm, and construct railways to supplement inland river transport. The state lacked the technological capacity, managerial aptitudes, capital access, and ideological disposition to undertake the task of accumulation on its own.²⁰ But it had seductive inducements: willingness to offer from its sovereign treasure house vast concessions of land and mineral rights, to place its apparatus of hegemony at the service of corporate endeavor to assure a labor supply, and, for railway construction, to guarantee from its fiscal base a return on capital. In exchange, it acquired substantial passive shares in the major colonial corporations.

Through this formula, the Empain group entered in 1902 to build the Chemin de Fer des Grands-Lacs (CFL), in return for four million hectares of land and mineral rights, including the power to cede these claims to third parties, a guarantee of amortization of capital and 4 percent interest, and an additional four million hectares for each supplementary investment of twenty-five million gold francs.²¹ The powerful financial giant, Société Générale de Belgique, was brought in during 1906 with the launching of three major undertakings: Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (UMHK), the Société Internationale Forestière et Minière (Forminière), and the Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga (BCK). The UMHK was granted exclusive

20. In one area in which the state endeavored to operate on its own, exploitation of the northeast gold mines, it was forced by its lack of technological knowledge to turn over the operations, for a minimal capital input, to a private consortium in the mid-1920s; Bakonzi Agayo, "The Gold Mines of Kilo-Moto in Northeastern Zaire, 1905–1960," Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1982.

21. Jean-Philippe Peemans, "Le rôle de l'état dans la formation du capital au Congo pendant la période coloniale (1885–1960)," *Etudes et Documents* (Louvain, 1973).

mineral rights to the rich Shaba (Katanga) ore bodies; Forminière received a ninety-nine-year monopoly on any mineral deposits it could identify in a six-year period within a tract of one hundred and forty million hectares. The BCK was endowed with twenty-one million hectares of mineral rights in the zone traversed by the prospective rail line and virtually all the capital required for actual construction; the BCK assumed only the responsibility for managing the line.

Even with these generous incentives, until after World War I the risks for capital and uncertainties for the state were substantial. By the 1920s, however, a rich flow of profits for capital and a mineral-based revenue flow for the state had been assured. Wild rubber, 87 percent of exports in 1900, fell to 1 percent by 1928, by which time copper exceeded 50 percent of exports. By 1932, the Belgian Congo accounted for more than half the world's diamond trade, mostly in the industrial grades.

In the agricultural sphere, a new system of state-directed peasant production was erected, with European firms awarded monopoly rights in the processing and marketing spheres. Plantation agriculture, with administrative assistance in labor recruitment, was utilized in some areas, especially for oil palms and, in Kivu, for coffee. But the fulcrum of colonial state agriculture became organized peasant production. The state equipped itself with a legal weapon in the ordinance of 20 February 1917, obliging the peasant to devote at least sixty days annually to cultivation of crops prescribed by the administration, enforced by penal sanctions. Local administrators were informed at once by circular that this ordinance provided them with "the means necessary to induce cultivators to expand their crops." As Mulambu points out, these means "were nothing other than military or police occupation."²² The view of the newly created state agricultural service was expressed by an agronomist posted at Bumba in 1918:

The sole way to improve native agriculture is to force the blacks to plant their crops following the principles indicated by competent agents. At this time, only the territorial administration, backed by armed force, can achieve this goal, and even this only temporarily.²³

Obligatory cultivation, ostensibly for educational purposes, became the cornerstone of state control over peasant agriculture. Enforcement was vigorous; some 59,070 convictions were recorded in 1938 for contravention of the agricultural regulations, and this figure does not include punishments routed through customary jurisdiction (disrespect for a chief) or collective sanctions

22. Mulambu Muvulya, "Le régime des cultures obligatoires et le radicalisme rural au Zaïre (1917-1960)," Ph.D. diss., Université Libre de Bruxelles, 1974, p. 96.

23. Mulambu, "Le régime les cultures obligatoires," p. 102.

through military occupation of recalcitrant villages. The state fixed prices for export crops, using a formula assuring the profitability of the marketing firms. There were regional variations in the weight of the system upon the peasant; it fell most heavily upon the seven hundred thousand cotton planters, especially where yields were modest. Food-crop producers faced somewhat less controlled markets, and those favorably situated to supply urban markets were the most prosperous African farmers.

Although by the time of institutionalized hegemony the state could rely on a mineral-secured revenue base, fiscal returns from the peasant sector remained important. The head tax alone, levied on rural households, still provided 21 percent of state revenue in 1921 and 13 percent in 1939. Peemans estimates that during the interwar period it constituted between 25 and 65 percent of rural incomes (compared with direct taxes upon European residents of less than 10 percent).²⁴

Thus the drive to ensure a revenue base to underwrite the state's hegemony shaped its commitment to promoting accumulation. In turn, the requirements of continued accumulation shaped the nature of the exercise of hegemony. As Governor-General Maurice Lippens expressed the matter in 1922, every official had to be "penetrated with the idea that his reason for existence is to favor and develop our occupation and that this duty consists in supporting every enterprise." In no circumstances could an official express the view that "once taxes are paid and other legal obligations are met the native may remain inactive."²⁵ The census designation of Congolese males as H.A.V. (*homme adulte valide*) is richly evocative of the state commitment to accumulation. Where the grid of control by state and corporation reached its peak, as in the urban copperbelt, it was an awesome apparatus. Indeed, Fetter persuasively argues that a totalitarian society had been created by the UMHK by the 1930s, in alliance with the state and the Benedictine mission, with "full control over its human milieu," extending to "virtually all aspects of the life of its African workers."²⁶

The comprehensive nature of colonial hegemony was enhanced by the interlocking structures of domination constructed by the corporations and the Christian missions as well as the state. The mission establishment had virtually as many personnel as the state, and more than three times as many outposts. Dominant in the sphere of cultural policy, the missions were the

24. Jean-Philippe Peemans, "Capital Accumulation in the Congo under Colonialism: The Role of the State," in Peter Duignan and L. H. Gann, eds., *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960* (Cambridge, England, 1978), vol. 4, p. 176.

25. Cited in Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*, vol. 2, p. 539.

26. Bruce Fetter, "L'Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, 1920-1940: La naissance d'une sous-culture totalitaire," *Cahiers du CEDAF* 6 (1973): 38.

principal agency for executing the "civilizing mission" of the colonial state. The task of spiritual conquest was far reaching; the state and corporation needed only to use the body, whereas the Church wished to capture the soul. While the foreign observer could readily distinguish between state, corporation, and Church, to the Congolese subject, as Douglas observed, "they were as one," the orders of each carrying the irresistible weight of "Bula Matari."²⁷

Hegemony had its limits. For example, there were some divergences of interest between state, company, and Church at the peak of the labor crisis in the mid-1920s. During the 1930s and World War II, the cutbacks in state personnel imposed by the revenue loss in the depression and military requirements during the war eroded dominance to a degree. As Vansina points out, in well-structured historical polities such as Kuba, a crafty incumbent had some room for maneuver.²⁸ Syncretic religious movements offered an avenue of escape, and diverse stratagems of passive avoidance and resistance were perfected. The scope of the colonial state at its apogee, and the magnitude of its pretensions to remake African society, are nonetheless awesome.

TOWARD POWER TRANSFER: THE COLONIAL STATE IN RETREAT

World War II was a watershed for the African colonial state. The international environment that enveloped it had decisively altered; no longer was it secure against external challenge. New relationships had to be constituted with its subjugated civil society, whose voice of protest now resonated in a receptive global arena. Older doctrines of trusteeship were interpreted in ways that made much more insistent demands upon the colonizers.

The imperial mind did not at once consider its vocation of domination at an end. Governor-General Pierre Ryckmans solemnly declared at the end of the war that "the days of colonialism are over," but he had in mind some new form of permanent imperial relationship. Empire was to be recast as partnership, but certainly not abandoned.

Decolonization forced itself onto the official agenda little by little, and only retrospectively came to dominate the entire period. The premise of decolonization, with its gradually unfolding sense of urgency, totally altered the problematic of hegemony. The colonial state had to be made self-standing. Hegemony required constitutionalization; organic institutional links with civil society were needed, which invested subjects with citizenship. Out of

27. Writing of the Lele, but generally applicable; Mary Douglas, *The Lele of the Kasai* (London, 1963), p. 265.

28. Jan Vansina, "Les Kuba et l'administration territoriale de 1919 à 1960," *Cultures et développement* 4, 2 (1972), pp. 275-326.

these institutions would arise a political class, built from the ground up, who would succeed to power after a tutelary period and exercise rule in collaboration with their European colleagues.

In the Belgian case, the initial design was to seek definition of a special status for the now growing *évolué* class, whose initial claims were above all privileged standing for themselves within the framework of colonial society. "What will be our place in the world of tomorrow?" asked Paul Lomami-Tshibamba in the second issue of *La Voix des Congolais* in 1946, echoing the 1944 memorandum from Kananga (Luluabourg) *évolués*, requesting that they be shielded "from the application of certain treatments and measures which might be applicable to a backward and ignorant mass."²⁹ For the mass of the population, a broader share in the benefits of economic growth was proposed, through state-directed increases in the wage levels, new schemes of reorganizing peasant agriculture, and the extension of amenities.

There was a recognition by the colonial official class that the state itself had to be redefined to include a place for civil society. Until the late 1950s, the rhythms and nature of ultimate decolonization were the exclusive preserve of the official mind. Crucial assumptions were the availability of several decades of time, the retention of the basic structure of the colonial state, a permanent role for the European population, and perpetuation of a tutelary Belgian linkage through indissoluble links of post-colonial association. Thus the first vague design of a future Congolese state unveiled in 1952 called for a "Eur-african" polity wherein European and African communities were to share power equally, in an autonomous state bound to the metropole through a "Belgo-Congolese community." This model governed the urban statute of 1957, that long, slow elaboration of the first major structural reform permitting civil society participation.

Debates on decolonization began to involve the metropolitan state more directly in colonial affairs. Permeating its reason of state throughout this era was the implicit assumption of continuing proprietary rights. There was an amazingly resilient myth, in the face of its empirical invalidity, that great sacrifices of blood and treasure had been made; in fact, the 1908 Colonial Charter had as its cornerstone the "séparation des patrimoines," explicitly to insulate the metropole from such risks.³⁰ Until nationalist voices began to emerge as a factor from 1956 on, the immediate pressures upon the colonial state and its metropolitan overlay came entirely from the colonial interest

29. *Dettes de guerre* (Elisabethville, 1945), pp. 128–29.

30. Jean Stengers jolted Belgium with his demonstration that Belgium put very little into its colonies; *Le Congo: combien a-t-il coûté à la Belgique?* (Brussels, 1957).

groups. Even a progressive and reformist Catholic lawyer articulated these generally shared views in 1945:

We have made this country, we have conquered it and we have grouped it. A social policy will complete this task of unification, will substitute for the actual fragmentation a united and conscious people . . . far from risking elimination of Belgium from the Congo, this will associate Belgium more intimately to its colony. The Congo will remain Belgian if we move forward.³¹

From 1956 on, the articulation of an African perspective began to weigh upon the process of redesigning the colonial state. With the 1956 manifestos of the Alliance des Bakongo (ABAKO) calling for immediate independence, and a group of Kinshasa (Leopoldville) intellectuals from up-river and Kasai with Catholic associations (Conscience Africaine) asking for emancipation over thirty years the dialectic altered. With growing impatience and passion, the "racial partnership" was rejected and an independent African state demanded. Decisive impetus was given to these claims after the January 1959 Kinshasa riots, which shattered the confidence of the Belgian managers of the colonial state.

Little noted at the time, however, was the precise nature of what was demanded by way of power transfer, or what could be conceded. A tacit premise on all sides was that the essential hegemonic armature of the colonial state would remain. At issue were the pace and scope of its Africanization and the nature of its constitutionalization. The model of the ideal polity to be replicated was the metropolitan state. For the colonial official class, it was the only version of the political good that they knew. And the Belgian model enjoyed high standing in nationalist eyes as well. As the Belgian public-law specialist Professor Perin noted, "The big argument which tipped the scales in favor of the European tradition is the confidence which the functioning of the Belgian regime inspires in the Congolese. The political regime of Belgium has shown itself to be endowed with a rather surprising prestige, even amongst certain Congolese leaders least suspect of indulgence toward the colonizer."³² Both sides, thus, accepted the basic framework of the metropolitan state as the authoritative political blueprint for the post-colonial state.

The model was entirely at odds with the autocratic tradition of the colonial era. Profoundly embedded in the colonial state was a command relationship with civil society, reflected in its laws, its routines, its mentalities, even its imagery. The gulf between the Bula Matari state and a constitutional democracy was vast, far wider than was apparent at the time.

31. Antoine Rubbens, in *Dettes de guerre*, pp. 142, 143.

32. Jules Gérard-Libois and Benoît Verhaegen, *Congo 1960* (Brussels, 1961), vol. 1, p. 106.

Other far-reaching and difficult adjustments were required in the nature of hegemony. The metamorphosis of subject into citizen had many implications in the individual interactions of state and society. At the collective level, it had always been an article of faith to the official mind that there was no civil society in the organic sense; a major justification for alien rule was the impossibility of generating a general will from the disparate populations joined in subjugation. Absent the Rousseauvian Legislator, *and* the Lugardian Trustee is indispensable. These engrained convictions now had to be set aside, to accept the nationalist thesis that a nation was historically ordained and immediately forthcoming.

There was sharp dispute, however, over what kind of national self-image was to prevail for the mass of subjects facing elevation to citizenry. Nearly all Africans rejected the Eurafrican state model that the colonial official class had sought to promote. Two partly overlapping lines of cleavage divided the numerous political associations that sprang up in the last two years of colonial rule as the barriers to political organization were dropped. One axis of division separated movements committed to a unitary vision of nationalism, consistent with mainstream radical African nationalism of the day and the heritage of the colonial state, and those who advocated a more pluralized, federalist project, tinged with secessionism. The other fault line divided those advocating a radical, aggressive nationalism from those more receptive to post-colonial accommodation with the colonizer. The compression of the time frame for power transfer, the intensity of the contest for access to power, and the swift politization of ethnic and regional divergences prevented any clear resolution of these contrasting images of national ideology prior to independence. They were held in abeyance while independence was celebrated, then at once reignited to help trigger the "Congo crisis" following the transfer of power.

Doctrines of legitimation had to be extensively revised in the decolonization era. The claim to rule was to be grounded in representativity, not conquest. Thus political parties had to mobilize an electoral clientele and authenticate their credentials in electoral contests subject to the supervision of the withdrawing power. The administration was not above employing its dwindling resources in the support of movements deemed least offensive to colonial interests, especially parties advocating the centralized tradition of the colonial state and articulating a "moderate" nationalism. Until the last minute, the colonial state counted upon the residual influence of its rural intermediaries to assure a strong voice for such parties. Two legitimating themes originating in the institutionalization phase achieved central importance, redefining the character of the terminal colonial state in crucial ways: development and welfare. By the time of World War II, the colonial state had gradually accumulated the institutional capacity to manage this process. To its core structure of

administrative domination was added, from the early postwar years, a rapid enlargement of its technical and specialized services. The construction of a developmental, welfare state went forward with remarkable vigor. In the Belgian Congo, a rudimentary prewar educational system had become by 1959 a vast network serving 70 percent of primary-age children. Whereas in the 1920s it could be said that a medical service for Africans did not exist, by the late 1950s the Belgians could justifiably claim that their health service was "without doubt the best in the whole tropical world."³³

The terminal Belgian colonial state expanded its consumption in tandem with its services. Outlays increased elevenfold between 1939 and 1950 and tripled in the final colonial decade. The escalation of state consumption was facilitated by several exceptionally favorable factors on the revenue side. The long postwar commodity boom for African exports brought huge windfalls in export taxes. Belgium, like other colonial powers, for the first time was willing to make large-scale developmental public investments in the African domains, and high profit levels permitted extensive corporate investment in expansion. Thus the colonial state had a revenue base to sustain its formidable pace of expansion until the copper prices broke in 1957.

In meeting its revenue imperative during these years of prosperity, there were some dangerous trends that would return to haunt post-colonial regimes, although they were little noted at the time that state expansion began to outstrip its revenue base. In the last three years of Belgian rule, state budgets fell into deficit, and an external debt of \$1 billion (1960 prices) was built up.

At its zenith, the Belgian Congo was the apotheosis of the African colonial state, in its elaborate architecture of hegemony. Perhaps this very fact made the art of power transfer singularly difficult to master. When the self-confidence of its official class was shattered by the Kinshasa riots and the progressive loss of ascendancy over significant parts of the territory in 1959, only a large-scale intervention by the metropolitan state could have prolonged its rule for a sufficient period to organize gracefully its demise. The internal conjuncture of the Belgian state and the fractured civil society upon which it was erected combined to rule out this possibility. Equally impossible, given the time frame and circumstances, was the emergence of a dominant coalition among the fragmented Congolese political movements. The high-risk formula finally agreed upon for the virtually immediate transfer of formal sovereignty in 1960 was appropriately known as the *pari congolais*.

Its core concept was the erection of a fragile political superstructure, of constitutional institutions based on replication of the Belgian parliamentary

33. Jean Stengers, "La Belgique et le Congo," *Histoire de la Belgique contemporaine* (Brussels, 1974).

mode, atop the enduring hegemonic structures of the colonial state. The superstructure – Parliament, ministers, parties—was to be wholly African, while the base, for a prolonged transitional post-independence period, would be overwhelmingly European. Until 1959, no legal provision existed for African entry into the top three, executive grades of the civil service; at the beginning of 1960, the forty-seven hundred occupants of these grades included only three Africans.³⁴ In the army, the first intake of fourteen cadets slated to qualify for commissions ten years later was announced at the end of 1958.³⁵

This fragile edifice gave way at once, beginning with the inner ossature of the state institutional framework, the armed forces. A mutiny of the Congolese troops, inflamed by the realization that independence had brought no change in their situation, nor any prospect of change, broke out five days after independence and rapidly spread throughout the country. Overcome by panic, most European administrative cadres fled on the heels of the Belgian officers. Two critical mineral-endowed regions, Katanga (Shaba) and South Kasai, declared their secession, offended by the distribution of posts in the new political institutions and giving effect to long-simmering separatist inclinations nurtured by mining interests and the settler community in the former. Two months after independence, the frail Belgian-modeled political constitution became all but inoperative, as the chief of state (Joseph Kasavubu) and the prime minister (Patrice Lumumba) ruptured their relationships.³⁶ When Lumumba, who had achieved heroic standing as the embodiment of radical African nationalism, was assassinated in January 1961, prospects for the future of the country seemed dismal. A failed decolonization seemed to have condemned the country to disintegration and prolonged chaos.

The legacy of Bula Matari, however, did not so quickly disappear. Within the heritage of the colonial state were important reservoirs of capacity, which served to insulate the Congo from the impasse of its political institutions. Important sectors of public policy had long been delegated to the corporate and mission partners of the colonial state: the educational system, a good fraction of the health network, a portion of the communication infrastructure. In most areas, expatriate personnel serving capital and Church remained at their posts, or left for only short periods. Within the state, just below the European executive class was a large reservoir of senior Congolese clerks,

34. Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo* (Princeton, 1965), p. 402.

35. Gérard-Libois and Verhaegen, *Congo 1960*, vol. 1, p. 342.

36. Of the vast literature concerning the "Congo crisis," see in particular Gérard-Libois and Verhaegen, *Congo 1960*; Cathryn Hoskyns, *The Congo Since Independence* (London, 1965); Madelaine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables* (New York, 1982).

blocked from advancement by the racial exclusion policies of the colonial state. Though they lacked formal educational credentials, they frequently had the skills of long experience and a certain autodidactic sophistication. Further insulating the state from the initial crisis impact was the endowment of a largely new physical infrastructure, a product of the very large public investment fed by the 1950s revenue gusher. Finally, the terminal colonial state enjoyed what one Zairian scholar has labeled a "collective charisma" as an omniscient actor, adding to its older Bula Matari image.³⁷ The post-independence disarray damaged but did not completely destroy such Zairian perceptions.

International factors played a central part in preserving the Congo as a single state, with the United Nations, United States, and to some extent Belgium playing a tutelary role. In the midst of the immediate post-independence political crisis, the factional divisions that paralyzed the political overlay of the state prevented the assertion of autonomy or security impulses. But the normative structure and competitive dynamics of the international state system supplied survival resources for the post-colonial state, while the major actors in the system struggled to determine its orientation. For different reasons, both the United States and the Soviet Union were committed to the maintenance of a single unit; both were in intense competition to build clienteles among the new states of Africa, a pursuit that would have been severely compromised by any policy other than preservation of the colonial unit. With amazing speed, a veritable African international public law for the preservation of colonial partition boundaries sprang up with independence, quickly enshrined in the 1963 Charter of the OAU. The United Nations, which became a major tutelary actor in the "Congo crisis" in less than a month after independence, was naturally propelled by its own organizational logic, as a cartel of states, and the African doctrine of sanctity of extant territorial definitions, to a resolute support of a single, united Congo.³⁸

Particularly problematic in the initial post-colonial period was the relationship between the state and civil society. Theoretically transformed from subjects into citizens, the Congolese were ostensibly empowered by the constitutional superstructure; the immediate dereliction of the political institutions, and their penetration by and subordination to external tutelage, rendered nugatory the hypothetical new relationships. Yet civil society had been transformed in important ways during the era of decolonization. The

37. Ilunga Kabongo, in a presentation on the state in Zaire, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 16 April 1985.

38. Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," *World Politics* 35, 1 (Oct. 1982): 1-24; Donald Rothchild and Victor A. Olorunsola, eds., *State Versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas* (Boulder, 1983).

growing social competition for opportunities for mobility, especially in the urban sector, had created new forms of ethnic consciousness, subsequently politicized and mobilized by the bitter competition for at least the illusions and appearances of power in the post-colonial state. The 1950s as well generated a powerful set of hopes and expectations affecting the young generation. The welfare thrust of the terminal colonial state and its ample resource base brought—really for the only time in the colonial era—a tangible, broad-based, sustained rise in the level of African well-being, and the anticipation of more to come. The harsh and coercive texture of Bula Matari hegemony softened dramatically; during the 1950s, public whippings as a common form of punishment ended (1952), obligatory cultivation was terminated (1957), and associational rights were gradually extended (especially 1958–1959). The rapid generalization of primary education and solid beginnings of secondary and higher educational systems held out tantalizing prospects for social ascent. Youth tasted the promise of a life more abundant, and escape from subjugated status. To these dreams, realistic enough in their time, the political campaigns added millenarian visions of an earthly paradise to accompany independence.

Post-colonial circumstance did indeed bring spectacular ascent to the political class and to a segment of the clerical and noncommissioned ranks in the bureaucracy and the army. For most of the population, however, unpleasant new experiences lay in store as a product of the political dislocations: inflation, shortages, pay arrearages in the public sector, insecurity. The bitterness of the disappointments, above all to the youth generation, provided the mobilizational base for a loosely knit array of political figures, who invoked the radical heritage of the martyred Lumumba and called for a “second independence.” The wave of rebellion that swept the country in 1964–1965 for a time eliminated state authority in approximately a third of the territory. The rebellions were weakened from within by the incoherence and divisions of the insurgent leaders, their lack of a clear alternative project, and their inability to contain and channel the profound social anger that supplied the energizing force to their movements. Increments of force supplied by recruitment of white mercenaries, and some military support from Belgium and the United States, permitted the ruling coalition in Kinshasa to repulse the insurgents. The terrible ravages of this episode and the innumerable atrocities committed by rebel forces, youth bands, national army units, and mercenary auxiliaries alike traumatized civil society, instilling a profound yearning for restoration of the order and security recollected from the Bula Matari era.³⁹

39. The most thorough account of the rebellions remains Benoît Verhaegen, *Rébellions au Congo* (Brussels, 1966; 1969). See also Crawford Young, “Rebellion and the Congo,” in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali Mazrui, eds., *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970), pp. 969–1011.

Despite these challenges, the shell of a national state survived these difficult years. Ultimately, United Nations military intervention eliminated the secessions. The moderate factions, with United Nations, United States, and Belgian support, regained constitutional sanction when a new government was anointed by a reassembled Parliament in August 1961. Major concessions were made to the politicized cleavages of ethnicity and region by tolerating the division of the six colonial provinces, purely administrative units, into twenty-one provinces with a degree of autonomy. A quasi-federal constitution was drafted in 1964, and—amazingly—national parliamentary elections were conducted in early 1965, contested by no less than 223 political parties. Given the despondency concerning the Zairian state in the 1980s, the early republic enjoys a modest rehabilitation in retrospect. But in the early 1960s the conviction was widespread that a resurrection of the Bula Matari model—united, centralized, strong—was indispensable.

Thus, when the military high command with Mobutu Sese Seko at its head seized power on 24 November 1965, the hegemonic project that was proposed enjoyed wide acceptance. A state closely modeled in administrative structure on its colonial predecessor was systematically reconstructed. The ethnoregional bastions supplied by the twenty-one autonomous provinces were suppressed, and a set of administrative subdivisions approximating those of Belgian rule were restored (eight, rather than six, plus Kinshasa as a capital region). Central control, hierarchy, and unity of command became the operating principles of rule once again. The political apparatus of power transfer—political parties, elected assemblies—was dismantled.⁴⁰ The prefectoral, Bonapartist, Leopoldian state seemed to be back.

The institutionalization of post-colonial state hegemony, however, could not rest upon the bureaucratic armature of the Bula Matari state alone. In reasserting the hegemony of the state, Mobutu could not fall back on the formulas that had served so well as colonial ideology: trusteeship, good government. In keeping with a pattern general to Africa, the Mobutu regime was thus driven to weave together radical and populist political language and exclusionary political institutions. The single party, the argument ran, incarnated the popular will of the new nation. For this reason, the party was entitled to unencumbered exercise, through its leadership, of national sovereignty. So the new state was not simply a bureaucratic autocracy, alien to boot, like its colonial predecessor. It was a political monopoly legitimated by often radical nationalist ideology, appropriating Lumumbist themes, ritually

40. For detailed examination of the state in the Mobutu era, and the bibliographic references, see Thomas M. Callaghy, *The State-Society Struggle: Zaire in Comparative Perspective* (New York, 1984); Crawford Young and Thomas Turner, *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State* (Madison, 1985).

consecrated by periodic electoral ceremonies. The Mobutu instrument, the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR), was launched in 1967 as organ of "authentic Zairian nationalism," an ideology later personalized as "Mobutism." The party was designated "sole political institution"; state agents were simultaneously party officials, and state and party became indistinguishable.

But this formula of fusion of the bureaucratic core and a single-party overlay was not sufficient either. In pursuit of hegemony, there was a powerful tendency toward personalization of rule and patrimonialization of state. Formal hierarchy, bureaucratic regulation, and abstract administrative norms, which generally sufficed for the colonial state, were not alone adequate after independence. The kernel of state personnel—key political operatives, top elements in the security forces, ranking technocratic state servants—needed more incentives to zealous performance and personal fidelity than could be supplied by arid jurisprudence or the public vocabulary of nationalism. Far more personal inducements and sanctions for the ruling class were required.

Thus the award of high office became linked to personal service to the ruler. Public resources at the command of the ruler became a reservoir of benefices and prebends to assure fidelity. Dismissal from office, disgrace, and, not infrequently, prosecution for malfeasance were the sanction. Holders of high office, individually, became clients of the ruler; collectively, they were a service class.

Viewed as a system, patrimonialism is well described as personal rule by Jackson and Rosberg: "a system of relations linking rulers not with the 'public' or even with the ruled (at least not directly), but with patrons, associates, clients, supporters, and rivals, who constitute the 'system.' If personal rulers are restrained, it is by the limits of their personal authority and rivals, who constitute the 'system.'"⁴¹ Yet the system as a whole must be seen as not simply patrimonialism but rather as interpenetration of the inherited patterns of colonial autocracy, the single-party political monopoly based on nationalist ideology and personalized patrimonial rule.

The autonomy impulse was given potent impetus by the importance of nationalism in state ideology. It was further reinforced by the necessity for Mobutu to efface the embarrassments of his well-known intimate American connections and sponsorship. The new regime moved with vigor to exploit the opportunities offered by the consolidation of its authority and the alleviation (for a time) of the economic constraints of hyperinflation, and dependence on large aid injections, by a well-conducted economic reform in 1967. Zaire for a time laid claim to a vocation of African leadership and sought escape from dependency through a multiplication of external partners. In his first decade

41. Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 19.

of power. Mobutu paid a state visit to virtually every world capital of note save Moscow (where a planned 1974 visit was canceled because the Soviets refused to accord sufficient ceremonial deference), peaking in 1973 when he spent no less than 150 days out of the country. His melodramatic 1973 rupture with Israel inaugurated a period of close associations with the Arab world, and a spectacular pilgrimage to China in January 1973, when Maoism still resonated with radical connotations, enlarged for a period his room for maneuver in the international arena.

Security for the post-colonial state, as for its colonial predecessor, was above all perceived as a matter of protecting the state and its ruling group from potential assault by disaffected segments of civil society or from dismemberment by secession. The reality of both potential threats was vividly illustrated by the 1964–1965 rebellions, on the one hand, and the 1960–1963 Shaba secession on the other. Neighboring states harbored no aggressive designs on Zaire that necessitated preparation to repulse an external attack, but they were viewed as a potential source of danger through sheltering and even arming and encouraging Zairian dissidents. At one point or another, most of the nine bordering states had occasion to provide aid and comfort to opposition groups (Congo-Brazzaville, Sudan, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Angola).

The design of security forces, accordingly, was governed above all by the requirements of internal repression. An unending process of reform, rationalization, and professionalization had marked the post-colonial armed forces. At the same time, the ruler—based on close observation of patterns of incumbent displacement elsewhere in Africa, and recollecting his own avenue to power—is apprehensive about the officer corps as the most likely source of a successor. Thus a simultaneous process of repeated purges of the security forces, undermining Weberian rationality, accompanies professionalization. An inner cadre of top officers, patrimonially linked to the ruler by regional affinity, kinship, and high personal rewards, is retained at the summit. Meanwhile, the calculus of security includes the possibility of securing the intervention of foreign detachments in an emergency (United Nations in 1960–1964, Belgian and American in 1964, Moroccan in 1977, Moroccan, French, and Belgian in 1978), or the attachment of foreign advisers to Zairian units (in the early 1980s, French, Belgian, Chinese, and Israeli personnel).

The resurrected, neo-Leopoldian state whose authority and centralized hegemony had been in large measure restored by the late 1960s had expansive—and expensive—ambitions. In the eyes of its rulers, the vast size and potential wealth of the country endowed it with a manifest destiny of continental leadership. Its security forces—even with their limited, internal mission—had been substantially enlarged, and aspired to move upstream in the technological infrastructure. The massive primary-school infrastructure be-

queathed by the colonial state had to be completed with a far more costly secondary and higher educational network. Until economic crisis by the latter 1970s made it impossible, the potential intelligentsia was to be incorporated through the medium of public employment. An extremely costly set of public infrastructure projects were constructed with foreign funds. Last, but not least, the ruling group and the politico-commercial class nurtured by the state aspired to rapid accumulation through the agency of the state.

These various schemes required a substantial increase in revenue flow. For a time, this was accomplished through sharp increases in state rents on the mineral sector, maintaining high effective rates of peasant taxation, replacing European marketing agencies with parastatals, and, in 1973–1974, expropriation of much of the colonial economy for distribution as patrimonial prebends to the political class. Foreign capital was eagerly solicited, and during the early 1970s an external debt of \$3 billion was swiftly acquired.

This dynamic of aggrandizement of the state and its dominant politico-commercial class reached its outer limits in 1974, when state expenditures reached 54 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and revenue covered only 63 percent of outlays.⁴² In that same year, copper prices—the major source of state rents—fell from \$1.50 to 53 cents per pound. The expropriation of the colonial economic sector went awry, dislocating commercial networks and escalating the inflation triggered by state financial management. The 1975 bid to broker Angolan decolonization through intervention in a losing coalition including South Africa and the United States undermined Zaire's claim to continental leadership. In 1975 international financial institutions discovered the magnitude of the Zairian debt, and external borrowing as an answer to the revenue imperative was closed off. The fabric of hegemony was unraveling, as an increasingly sullen rural sector found growing opportunities for circumventing it. Parallel economies silently expanded and appeared on the verge of swallowing up parts of the public realm. Inflation became endemic, and real wages shriveled. The patrimonial and personalist mode of decision making had exposed the state to heavy risks on its major development projects, nearly all of which turned out badly. The post-colonial state was at bay.

What lessons may be drawn from the crisis of the post-colonial state in Zaire? As we look back at the power-transfer process, instructed by the quarter-century of history that lies between, we may suggest that the political challenge of decolonizing the Leopoldian leviathan was far greater than most believed at the time of transfer of sovereignty. Our interrogation of the past has been framed by the two post-colonial crisis that have beset Zaire: the first,

42. Banque du Zaire, *Rapport annuel*, 1975, p. 100.

immediate and conjunctural, from 1960–1965, and the second, profound and prolonged, beginning in 1974 and continuing into the present. The first arose out of the particular circumstances of precipitous power transfer and the failure of the high-risk *pari congolais*. At the time, most observers attributed the “Congo crisis” to the derelictions of an aborted decolonization.⁴³ The second crisis has triggered much more extensive processes of state decay, and it elicits more far-reaching questions about the problematic of power transfer and the difficulties of adaptation of the colonial state.

To grasp the second post-colonial crisis, we need to step further back into the past, to seek an understanding of the inner logic of the colonial state. This, we argue, requires examination of the imperatives that first determined its shape in its formative period. Its structure and processes were governed by the drive to assert rapid hegemony, to acquire an internal revenue base, to secure its domain from rival predators, and to ensure its autonomy from subjugated civil society. A doctrine of colonial legitimation was constructed, initially with sole reference to metropolitan options and the European state system, but which over time became a creed underpinning the “collective charisma” it enjoyed with respect to the subjected populace.

The colonial state was, in the phases of institutionalization and decolonization, refined, rationalized, and professionalized, but its inner nature was not altered. The Belgian colonial state, enjoying an unusually favorable resource base once its revenue base shifted from wild produce (ivory and rubber) to mineral rents, and acquiring an exceptional ascendancy over civil society, became an extreme model of the African colonial state.

Its very success long shielded it from civil-society pressures for decolonization, and permitted the official mind to remain enclosed within utterly unrealistic designs of Eurafrican consociationalism until less than two years of Belgian sovereignty remained. When its hegemony was finally shaken, above all by the January 1959 Kinshasa riots, and when metropolitan state intervention to restore the dominance of the colonial state was politically impossible, a tumultuous process of power transfer was unleashed that led directly to the 1960 crisis.

Paradoxically, the disorders and insecurity of the “Congo crisis” years relegitimated the colonial state in the eyes of civil society. The resurrection of its hegemonic framework of rule by Mobutu was initially widely accepted precisely because, in the collective consciousness, the colonial state in its terminal form was associated with order, development, and rising hopes for social ascent by the younger generation. At first the neo-Leopoldian restoration appeared viable as the most apparent symptoms of disarray were reme-

43. Including, in the front ranks, this writer; this assumption is the central premise of Young, *Politics in the Congo*.

died: civil peace returned, hyperinflation was ended, national unity was assured, Zaire was a self-standing respected member of the African concert of states.

But the requirements of hegemony, and its linkage to the more particular incumbent interest in perpetuation of rule, led to adaptations that altered its character. To the bureaucratic-military alien ascendancy of the colonial state was added the exclusionary political monopoly of a single party. The claim to the sole right to rule formerly held by the foreign official class was now supplanted by that of a narrow politico-commercial ruling class, and above all the president, on the grounds that its organ, the MPR, was "the nation politically organized," as the 1974 constitution put the matter. At the summit, the politico-commercial class itself was managed by the president through an increasingly patrimonial pattern of personal rule. This pattern, joined to the relentless drive for accumulation by the politico-commercial ruling class, rapidly transformed the state into a zone of systematic corruption, whose top personnel amassed huge fortunes.⁴⁴ Few in Zaire would dissent from the harsh indictment of Zairian bishops in the January 1981 pastoral letter characterizing the state as nothing more than "organized pillage for the profit of the foreigner and his intermediary."⁴⁵

The synthesis of the colonial-state legacy and the patrimonial political monopoly combined the most unhappy features of the "hard state," erected by Leopold and his successors, with the "soft state" decried by Myrdal and Hyden.⁴⁶ The combination is lethal. There is reason to doubt whether the second crisis can be overcome by a state thus constituted.

If we now return to our opening argument, we would suggest the dilemmas facing contemporary Zaire exemplify broader African patterns. The current economic crisis afflicting much of Africa reflects, in significant part, pathological characteristics of the contemporary state. A definition of remedies is beyond the scope of this analysis but will surely include a profound reconceptualization of the state, its reconstruction according to a model more suitable than its colonial predecessor. This in turn will require an empowerment of civil society—economically, politically, and socially—that the colonial state was explicitly designed to prevent.

44. The leading student of Zairian corruption is David J. Gould, *Bureaucratic Corruption and Underdevelopment in the Third World: The Case of Zaire* (Elmsford, N.Y., 1980).

45. *Le Monde*, 28 July 1981.

46. Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations* (New York, 1968); Goran Hyden, *No Shortcuts to Progress* (Berkeley, 1983).

2. *The End of the British Empire in Africa*

ANTHONY LOW

Domino theories have been much in issue, and much in dispute, in the post-Second World War history of Southeast Asia. They seem decidedly applicable to the post-Second World War history of tropical Africa. As was well understood, there were in Africa various territorial differences of some magnitude. There were differences too between the policies of its different imperial powers and, indeed, between the policies of the same imperial power in different parts of Africa. But, aside from the partial exception of Egypt and the clear exception of Algeria, there were, in broad terms, three successive sequences to the independence of Africa outside the Union of South Africa, and domino theories were applicable to all three of them.

The first sequence extended from the independence of Libya in 1951, through the final withdrawal of British troops from Egypt in 1955, to independence for Morocco, Tunisia, and the Sudan in 1956. Algeria's exclusion from this first sequence precipitated one of the two colonial wars¹ of the first two sequences; but, apart from Algeria, by the mid-1950s all of North Africa had as a consequence become independent. It was widely anticipated that if there were to be further chain reactions in the attainment of African independence, there would be upward of at least half a dozen of them. There were in fact just two. The more extensive one (the second of the three sequences) involved the precipitate fall of a whole string of colonial regimes right across the middle of tropical Africa—thirty of them all told—in one quite unexpected collapse. The other, mostly in south-central Africa, was then delayed for a decade or more, but eventually overtook four territories that had escaped the earlier

1. Mau Mau was the other.

onrush. It is on these last two sequences that we shall focus in this chapter, and more especially on the British involvement in them.

The violence that accompanied the third sequence, in south-central Africa, surprised hardly anyone. Everyone, however, was surprised by the speed and extent of the second. At the end of World War II it would have been a bold prophet who would have forecast the precipitancy with which so much of tropical Africa was to win independence in the course of the second sequence. As the war ended the British would very shortly transfer power in all of South Asia, while the Dutch were soon to be chased out of Indonesia and the French from Indochina. But in one way or other the nationalist movements in all these countries had had a history that stretched back continuously to at least the opening of the century, and in each case, despite their variations, there was a long-fought and often bitter struggle.² Resistance movements had reared their heads in Africa, and nationalist aspirations had certainly in some people's minds come to the surface. But with few exceptions there were as yet next to no specifically nationalist movements in most of tropical Africa's many colonial territories as the Second World War drew to a close, and certainly no expectation in their colonial masters' minds that independence for any of them might be an early eventuality.

Nevertheless, the three major imperial powers across the tropical African midriff, Britain, France, and Belgium, had each been learning some crucial lessons in Asia. They knew that nationalism could erupt suddenly, forcefully, and disconcertingly, so they each gave their minds in the postwar years to how they could fend off such eruptions in Africa.

The British, as represented by their Colonial Office, sought to fashion the most elaborate mechanisms to these ends. Under the leadership of the Labour secretary of state for the colonies, Arthur Creech Jones (1946–1950), and impelled by the nervous energy of the head of its African branch, the young Andrew Cohen, the Colonial Office evolved one general set of British policies for Africa and then one specific set, which it believed would enable it to guide its colonial territories and prepare them for an ultimate independence without the kind of trauma the British and others had variously but usually encountered in Asia. Britain's ultimate commitment was to "responsible self-government . . . a goal towards which His Majesty's Government will assist them with all the means in their power." It was characteristic of the British that while they often gave their minds to bringing or holding together in federations several groups of territories, they always held to the notion of the

2. D. A. Low, "The Asian Mirror to Tropical Africa's Independence," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization 1940–1960* (New Haven, 1982), pp. 1–30.

separated independence of the entities they ruled from Britain itself, while always allowing for some continued relationship within the Commonwealth. They never contemplated—except oddly at one time as regards Malta—any direct involvement by their colonies in Britain's own institutions in London. The Colonial Office was thus clear in the postwar years that independence would sometime eventually come to each of the territories for which it held responsibility, and quite unusually (but not uniquely, as we shall see), it accordingly set about seeking to prepare for this.

Since there was now in Britain both a commitment to establishing the welfare state and some awareness of the debilitating effects of the depression and the war upon the colonies, so it was also now British policy, as the Labour colonial secretary put it in 1946, "to develop the Colonies and all their resources so as to enable their people speedily and substantially to improve their economic and social conditions."

Thus there was to be a sustained program of colonial development, covering agriculture, transport, education, and much else besides. At the same time universities were to be started, within which an elite would be developed to provide enlightened educated leadership for the future. Then in a striking about face it was planned to supersede the former British dependence upon collaborating chiefs—as expressed in the principal British African colonial policy of indirect rule—by the development of an "efficient and democratic system of local government." There were four purposes in mind here. First, to secure more developmentally oriented instruments of native administration than were provided by traditional chiefs. Second, to develop the basic building blocks for a new governmental system built up from below which, through a sequence of indirect elections by lower elected bodies, would lead on to the construction of higher legislative and executive bodies. Third, by this means in particular to compel prospective nationalist politicians to go out and compete with local worthies and win their political laurels close to the mass of their countrymen. It was hoped that nationalist politicians would thereby be deflected from operating at the national level only. Their cooperation was at the same time to be actively sought. And then, fourth, by such means it was planned to sow democratic traditions in African minds. Additionally, the long-standing British commitment to a steady progression from Crown Colony status to representative government to responsible government and finally to Dominion status and independence was to be very significantly replaced by a much more flexible, and numerous, series of possible constitutional changes that would avoid the sharp disjunctures between elected legislatures and official executives, as well as the rigidities and delays that had characterized the old progression. These distinct yet coordinated positions were then variously embodied in Britain's successive Colonial De-

velopment and Welfare acts (1945, 1950, 1955), in Creech Jones's notable Local Government dispatch of February 1947, in the Caine-Cohen Report of African Policy of May 1947, and in the discussions at the African Governors' Conference at Queens' College, Cambridge, in August 1947 (where several of these positions met a frosty reception from some of Britain's most senior African governors).³

But if all this now composed Britain's more general policy in Africa, there was a further, specific one as well. For in the British mind there was a fairly sharp distinction between those African colonies, largely in West Africa, where there were no European settlers, and those, in Central and East Africa, where since the beginning of the century numbers of European settler immigrants had made their homes. Here by the Second World War there had been a persistent confrontation between settler politicians and the Colonial Office. The settlers had long sought for an assurance that they would in due course enjoy as much self-government as their fellow European settlers in, for example, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. The Colonial Office, subject to a great deal of missionary and British liberal influence, insisted that, notwithstanding those precedents, where there was an African majority (as there invariably was here), African interests and not European settler interests had to remain "paramount." In Southern Rhodesia, where the South African Act of Union of 1910 had allowed the alternative prospect of incorporation into South Africa, the Europeans had won full internal responsible government for themselves in 1923. Elsewhere, particularly in Northern Rhodesia and Kenya, the settlers, while rigorously denied this right, nevertheless steadily advanced their positions, especially during the Second World War.⁴ But then as South Africa swung sharply toward Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid following the elections in 1948, the Colonial Office became increasingly fearful that without some new moves on their part, the influence of South Africa—already important for the economies of the two Rhodesias—would soon spread north much more powerfully than before and blow all the bulwarks supporting African "paramountcy" disastrously asunder.⁵ (Following South

3. The literature on all this is growing, e.g., Robert D. Pearce, *The Turning Point in Africa: Decolonization Policy, 1938–1948* (London, 1982); Ronald Robinson, "Sir Andrew Cohen: Proconsul of African Nationalism (1909–1968)," in L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, *African Proconsuls, European Governors in Africa* (New York, 1978). For a contemporary, pithy, authoritative summary see Arthur Creech Jones, "British Colonial Policy with Particular Reference to Africa," *International Affairs* 27 (April 1951): 176–83.

4. See still W. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. 2, *Problems of Economic Policy, 1918–1939*, part 2, (London, 1942), pp. 90–127. Also Ronald Robinson, "The Moral Disarmament of African Empire, 1914–1918," in Norman Hillmer and Philip Wigley, *The First British Commonwealth* (London, 1980), pp. 86–104.

5. There are some interesting details on this in Brian Lapping, *End of Empire* (London, 1985), pp. 460–63.

Africa's plans for a "pax Pretoriana" in the 1970s and 1980s, that possibility looks a good deal less fanciful than it seemed to many critics of British policy in the 1950s and 1960s).

Out of these concerns there evolved in the Colonial Office mind the proposition that the right way for British policy to proceed in East and Central Africa would not be to try to hold to the old policy of "paramountcy" but to develop the new policy of "partnership" between the races, so as to create "multi-racial" societies there and thus obviate the spread of South African influence and apartheid northward by obfuscating the issue of racial rivalry, indeed of conflict, over the local distribution of political power. The partnership doctrine could be—and indeed was—extensively propagated as a noble ideal. It enjoyed the support of an old war horse of "paramountcy", J. H. Oldham, and from 1949 onward was ideologically fostered by Colonel David Stirling's Capricorn Africa Society.⁶ It was at first, moreover, at least as assiduously propounded by Britain's Labour government before 1951 as by its Conservative successor thereafter. On 13 December 1950, for example, Creech Jones's successor as Labour colonial secretary, James Griffiths, appealed to all concerned, in a major statement on British policy in East Africa, "to work together towards that goal of true partnership on which the future prosperity and happiness of all in East Africa must depend."⁷ Thereafter the formal policy of partnership found hugely complex expression in all those racial formulas for the composition of legislatures and executives with which Britain's eastern- and central-African territories came to be plagued during the 1950s and early 1960s.⁸ In its idealist form it lent respectability—in much of Britain at least—to the major creation in 1953, initially with Labour-party support, of the settler-dominated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as well as to some people's hopes of a similar federation in East Africa too. In the British mind the application of "partnership" doctrines clearly distinguished East and Central Africa from British West Africa. To the settlers it was acceptable as an alternative to the South African Afrikaner's doctrine of apartheid, because (as the Federation's first prime minister bluntly described it) it entailed the partnership of European rider and African horse.

Indeed, so confident did the settlers now become that in the partnership doctrine they had in their hands an up-to-date justification for their claims to Dominion status, and so committed did the new Conservative government after 1951 become to it, that in 1957 the two governments jointly agreed not only to reduce the remaining curbs on the Federation's independence but

6. J. H. Oldham, *New Hope in Africa* (London, 1955).

7. "Statement about Colonial Territories in East Africa," 13 December 1950, *Hansard* (Commons) 1950–1951, vol. 482, cols. 1174–75; see also David Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics, 1945–1961* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 214–30, and Creech Jones, "British Colonial Policy."

8. D. A. Low and Alison Smith, *History of East Africa*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1976), app. 2.

also to bring forward by three years, to 1960, the decennial constitutional-review conference (that was already agreed), which it was widely understood would lead to the white-dominated Federation's full independence.⁹

The British were not alone in the deliberateness of their African policies following 1945. French policy for tropical Africa after the Second War was no less carefully fashioned. France committed itself as Britain did to a program of colonial economic development on an extensive scale. It set its face unequivocally, however, as the Brazzaville Conference in January and February of 1944 put it, against "any idea of autonomy or any possibility of evolution outside the block of the French Empire, or self-government even in the distant future." There were all the same to be representative assemblies in each of France's colonial territories as well as in its two federations, French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. In total contrast to the stance of the British, there was also to be increased African representation in France's own National Assembly in Paris, and much more extensive representation after 1946 in the assembly of the new "French Union." France's formal commitment to the processes of elite assimilation to, and intimate association with, France itself now indeed became marked, and despite their experience in Indochina the French believed that these contained all the ingredients needed to hold rampant colonial independence movements at bay.¹⁰

The Belgians' position was meanwhile simplicity itself. Like the two other imperial powers, they were strongly committed to programs of economic development and social welfare in their African colony of the Belgian Congo. But far from seeking to assimilate the Congo's emerging elite to Belgium's own society, the Belgians believed that the most efficacious way to check the propensity of colonial peoples to espouse anti-imperialism was in the first place to do nothing to facilitate the growth of a Westernized colonial elite; in the second, to make anything that even verged on nationalist politics in their colony impossible to conduct; and in the third, to preclude even their local colonial whites from mounting any specifically political activity. They believed arrantly that along these lines they could endlessly outlaw the colonial anti-imperialism that had so invariably erupted against their much less perspicacious fellow imperialists.¹¹

The central development right across the tropical-African belt in the 1950s and early 1960s was, however, that *all* these prescriptions were abruptly

9. Robert Blake, *A History of Rhodesia* (London, 1977), chaps. 20–23; R. I. Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), chaps. 9–10.

10. See, e.g., Elikia M'Bokolo, "French Colonial Policy in Equatorial Africa in the 1940s and 1950s," in Gifford and Louis, *Transfer of Power*, pp. 190–200.

11. Jean Stengers, "Precipitous Decolonization: The Case of the Belgian Congo," in Gifford and Louis, *Transfer of Power*, pp. 305–318.

blown away. African nationalism proved to be no respecter either of the distinction the British sought to draw between British West and British East and Central Africa or of the distinction the French drew between their tropical-African colonies and the British ones, let alone the distinction the Belgians drew between their colony and every other one.

The onset of this whirlwind needs little reiteration. It was first precipitated in the British colony of the Gold Coast. There in 1947 the United Gold Coast Convention was formed, with Kwame Nkrumah (lately returned from studies in America and a sojourn in Britain) as its paid secretary. The critical event took place in February 1948 when an outbreak of rioting, in Accra and elsewhere, left twenty-nine dead. Before the kind of pressure this represented, Britain's Labour government was now quite deliberately and regularly bending elsewhere (not least in the Middle East at the instance of its formidable foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin), and it now did so in West Africa too.¹² Propelled, moreover, in the Colonial Office by the influential Andrew Cohen (now suddenly anxious that Britain's wider reforms in Africa stood at risk), the British thereupon took the crucial decision to step ahead in both the Gold Coast and Nigeria, lest they should fatally lose the initiative (as they saw it) to West Africa's nationalists. "The most important thing" (so Britain's chief secretary in Nigeria, Sir Hugh Foot, propounded it) "is to take and hold the initiative [and] not to allow frustration to set in."¹³ As it happened Nkrumah and the Gold Coast's radicals were not to be easily assuaged. In 1949 he and his followers formed their breakaway Convention Peoples Party and in January 1950 embarked on a campaign of "positive action" for "self-government now." Strikes and violence and looting ensued. A state of emergency was declared, and arrests, of Nkrumah in particular, quickly followed. But elections were then held in 1951, which the CPP quite handsomely won.

A new governor, Arden-Clarke, who had lately served in Sarawak amid the nationalist maelstrom of Southeast Asia, thereupon released Nkrumah from jail to become without delay the Gold Coast's Leader of Government Business. Britain's timetable in the colony was thereby substantially speeded up. But it was not yet blown away. Further elections came to be held in 1954; and when it then transpired that there was a good deal of opposition to the CPP from the principally Ashanti-supported National Liberation Movement, the British insisted on a third election in 1956. The CPP, however, won this too, and short of turning about, which the British were not minded to do, independence for the Gold Coast could no longer be denied. Independence came in 1957, when its name was changed to Ghana. Britain thereby secured the

12. Wm. Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford, 1984).

13. Sir Hugh Foot, *A Start in Freedom* (London, 1964), p. 106. Again there are some interesting details in Lapping, *End of Empire*, pp. 370-78; and see Robinson, "Moral Disarmament of African Empire."

rewards it had been seeking—no further open conflict with West African nationalism; wide recognition of Britain's genuine commitment to colonial independence; and Ghana's willing membership of the British-sponsored Commonwealth of Nations.¹⁴

This relatively well-ordered denouement was greatly assisted by the separation of Britain's several African colonies from each other: the Gold Coast, that is, did not have to wait for the rest of Britain's Africa to move along the decolonization path, as Bengal had so disastrously had to wait for the rest of British India. Western and Eastern Nigeria, however, did have to wait for the more conservative Northern Nigeria with which they were bound up in the larger Federation of Nigeria. The former secured regional self-government in 1957—at the time of Ghana's independence; Northern Nigeria's self-government was put off until 1959. The accompanying negotiations, moreover, were far from easy. But thanks, not least, to two successive liberally minded governors-general, Sir John Macpherson and Sir James Robertson, and to the considerable aplomb of Britain's bullish Conservative colonial secretary, Oliver Lyttelton, and his successor, Alan Lennox-Boyd, it was eventually agreed that Nigeria should have its full independence on 1 October 1960.¹⁵ Sierra Leone followed closely behind, moving into independence in 1961.¹⁶

It had in the meanwhile been arranged with the United Nations that three other colonies should become independent in 1960 as well—the French United Nations Trustee Territories of Cameroons and Togo and the Trust Territory of Somalia, granted to the former colonial power, Italy, under a commitment in 1950 that it should be systematically prepared—as was done nowhere else—for full independence ten years later. In the event, however, these were by no means the only independences secured in 1960.

Back in 1954 France had suffered its humiliating defeat at Dien Bien Phu in Indochina, and all but simultaneously was then finally chased by the Geneva Agreements from its dominion there. Morocco and Tunisia—as we have seen—embarked on their full independence just two years later. As Algeria was denied this, since to so many French it was part of France's homeland, a major colonial war of liberation ensued from 1956 to 1962, which throughout these years constituted the anguished backdrop to all that occurred everywhere else in Africa.¹⁷

14. Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946–1960* (London, 1966); David Rooney, *Sir Charles Arden-Clarke* (London, 1982).

15. There is nothing still to surpass James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley, 1965). See also *The Memoirs of Lord Chandos* (London, 1962), chaps. 18–22.

16. Martin Kilson, *Political Change in a West African State*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1966); J. D. Hargreaves, *The End of Colonial Rule in West Africa* (London, 1979).

17. See Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–1962* (London, 1977).

That left the future of France's other colonies in Africa in a state of considerable uncertainty. In response to this the French position was marginally adjusted. The *loi cadre* of 1956 allowed the creation of African-dominated executives there in addition to the existing African-dominated legislatures. But larger changes soon followed. For when de Gaulle returned to power in 1958, propelled by the major upheavals the Algerian war created in France itself, he was keenly aware of the pressures that Ghana's independence in the previous year, and British policy elsewhere in West Africa, were putting on the French Empire. He accordingly proceeded to dismantle the two French federations of West and Equatorial Africa and transformed the now somewhat battered French Union into the French Community. While strongly committed as before to France's continuing purpose of closely associating its African territories with metropolitan France itself, and eschewing all ideas of following where the British had led before in preparing its colonies for independence within its Commonwealth, de Gaulle now made this a voluntary association. In 1958 he thus required that all of France's colonies, in Africa especially, should decide by referendum whether they wished to continue as members of the French Community or not. When twelve of France's African colonies thereupon voted yes, but Guinea voted no, Guinea was immediately cast into independence by France in an abrupt, dismissive, and avowedly exemplary manner.

But these gambits quickly failed. The larger proportion of West Africans had either now already won independence or were shortly to do so. Africa's European boundaries had never before looked quite so arbitrary. Some tropical-African leaders were now playing parts on the world stage from which others were arbitrarily excluded. Guinea, moreover, soon looked more of a model to follow than an example to be avoided. In an effort to stem the now rapidly advancing tide, de Gaulle appointed four African leaders in 1959 to be ministers advisory to the French delegation to the United Nations. However, in a speech in Dakar in December that year he moved toward acknowledging that there was no further possibility of stopping the skittles from falling over each other. The French Community could now at best hope to be little more than the equivalent of Britain's Commonwealth.

The Mali Federation (of Senegal and French Sudan) and Madagascar were the first to slip the rope. The necessary constitutional instruments for their independence were signed in April 1960. The Mali Federation became independent on 20 June 1960, the Malagasy Republic on 26 June. The race was then on to beat even Nigeria into independence, while keeping pace with the Trust Territories of Cameroons and Togo and, as we shall see, the Belgians' Congo. August 1960 thereupon saw eight French territories attaining their independence: Dahomey on 1 August, Niger on the 3rd, Upper Volta on the

5th, Ivory Coast on the 7th, Chad on the 11th, the Central African Republic on the 13th, the French Congo on the 15th, and Gabon on the 17th, while Mauritania followed a few months later in November. With all this the last-minute African substitutes for France's West African and Equatorial African federations also soon collapsed—the two successive, contracting, Mali federations; the Conseil de l'Entente; and the Union of Central African Republics. Since France's prime attention had been focused on the links between its tropical-African territories and France itself, the federations, being geographically amorphous, had never been determinedly welded together.¹⁸ Nigeria remained as West Africa's one viable federation (with its greatest traumas yet to come).

All these bouleversements had meanwhile brutally wrenched the Belgians from their former, superior, complacency. Having no previous experience of how to decolonize, they found themselves at a special disadvantage. Even as late as 1956 the very suggestion that Congolese independence could perhaps be attained in thirty years' time had been brushed by their leaders aside as ludicrously inconceivable. But in December 1958 Patrice Lumumba had formed the Mouvement National Congolais. In January 1959 there was fierce rioting in Leopoldville, and the Belgians now awoke from their dreams to discover that they no longer controlled key areas of their colony. Alert to the Netherlands' fruitless conflict with its former Indonesian colony (now rising to yet another peak in the continued dispute over West Irian); keenly aware of the appalling cost to their other neighbor France from its violent entanglements in Algeria; and riven by a violent domestic campaign against the dispatching of Belgian troops to the Congo (which in the case of conscripts was under the constitution dependent upon their—improbable—consent), dire decisions were swiftly taken in Belgium itself that extensive repression of its colonial nationalists could not conceivably be contemplated. Without any of the necessary timely preparations, leaves were now torn from Britain's book. An outside chance was sought of granting immediate independence to the Congo in the grim hope of thereby evoking a cordial last-minute nationalist response and so maintaining the essentials at least of their colonial state; it was calculated that with continued Belgian control of the army, the administration, and the economy, this might just prove feasible. In December 1959 a precipitate independence was thus swiftly propounded. June 1960 saw it being speedily proclaimed—but only to be followed by the disastrous mutiny of the still Belgian-officered Force Publique, the swift slide into the Congo's disintegration thereafter (which led in turn to a mass exodus of its Belgian

18. Ruth Schachter Morgenthau and Lucy Creevey Behrman, "French Speaking Tropical Africa," in Michael Crowder, ed., *The Cambridge History of Africa* vol. 8, *From c. 1940 to c. 1975* (Cambridge, England, 1984), pp. 611–73, is probably the latest authoritative summary.

settlers and administrators), and then to the fateful intervention of the United Nations before the year was out. That in turn generated a seismic fear among other whites—not least in East and Central Africa—at what some further precipitancy might portend for them.¹⁹

It is well to remember that the swiftest scuttle in Africa was not, however, by the Belgians from the Congo, but by the British from British Somaliland. There, likewise, next to nothing stood ready. Not until February 1960 was there an elected majority in the legislature. When its leaders then sought union with their Somali neighbors, whose long Italian-prepared independence would reach consummation in mid-year, the British tumbled over themselves to make this *pis aller* work. A conference in London agreed in May 1960 that British Somaliland should become self-governing on 26 June, a bare five days before Somalia itself was due to become independent, and on 1 July 1960—to Britain's intense relief—a united independent Somalia did, remarkably, come into being.²⁰

What had happened?

The Western world's imperial clamps had first been loosened and then wrenched apart in Asia. By 1954 North Vietnam, by 1957 Malaya (and soon afterward Singapore too), had gone the way of all the larger countries. British (and French) attempts to shore up collaborative governments in the Middle East had mostly failed as well (as the Iraqi revolution and the murder of Britain's ally, Nuri as-Said, had very recently shown in 1958).²¹ West European imperialism was generally on the run.

In Britain there was never as it happened any major debate over whether its West African colonies should be granted independence (as there had been in the 1930s over whether Britain should grant independence to India). Sheet anchors were now no longer employed. Slipping ropes were simply wrapped around bollards. The most powerful advocates now spoke, moreover, almost wholly on one side. There were a number of movements on the left, in particular (after 1954), the Movement for Colonial Freedom (though its influence is hard to assess).²² Initially the Labour party's Fabian Colonial Bureau was the most important lobby. The Rev. Michael Scott's Africa Bureau came, however, to occupy the most prominent place and, small as it always was, became remarkably effective, particularly by securing a hearing for African nationalist leaders visiting London in some of the places that mattered—

19. M. Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo* (Princeton, 1965).

20. I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia*, 2d rev. ed. (London, 1980), pp. 139–65.

21. Louis, *Middle East*; Lord Birdwood, *Nuri As-Said* (London, 1959); Majid Khadduri, *Independent Iraq, 1932–1958* (London, 1960).

22. Fenner Brockway, *Towards Tomorrow* (London, 1977), chaps. 23–27.

private meetings, for example, in the House of Commons. The churches were important as well. Canon Max Warren, general secretary of the Church Missionary Society, Canon John Collins of Christian Action, the archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, and other Church leaders, especially in Scotland, such as George Macleod of the Iona Community, all firmly argued in favour of African freedom.²³ Margery Perham, doyenne of British Africanists and Oxford don, was sometimes more cautious; but her magisterial, and keenly awaited, letters to the *Times* always upheld Britain's commitment to independence and could devastatingly rebuke obfuscating checks.²⁴ The *Times's* colonial editor, Oliver Woods, and its later Africa correspondent, W. P. Kirkman, the *Guardian's* Patrick Keatley, the *Economist's* Roy Lewis, and above all the *Observer's* Colin Legum, each ensured that London's quality press kept a close watch on the developing scene and insisted that there should be sensitive hands on its tillers. Legum's characteristic attitude was best displayed by his book *Must We Lose Africa?*,²⁵ half devoted to an attack on the liberally minded Sir Andrew Cohen (now governor of Uganda) for not being liberal enough. Other newspapers, as varied as the *Scotsman* and the *Daily Mail*, also strongly supported the African cause.

Perhaps the most potent factor, however, was the concurrence over African independence of first the Conservative opposition, and then after 1951 the Conservative government, with their Labour opponents—at least where there were no white immigrants to complicate the scene; prior to 1951 Conservative MPs had been predominantly empire minded. With the 1955 entry there was an even more marked change: the more European minded now outnumbered the empire men by two to one.²⁶ At the 1959 election half the Conservative candidates never mentioned the Commonwealth in their manifestos at all.²⁷ During the late 1940s the Conservative colonial spokesman, Oliver Stanley, had largely supported Creech Jones's initiatives. Throughout the 1950s, certainly in West Africa, Lyttelton and his successor as Conservative colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, both held firmly to the course their Labour predecessors had set.²⁸ By the mid-1950s the Labour party was

23. W. Purcell, *Fisher of Lambeth* (London, 1969), chap. 11; F. W. Dillistone, *Into All the World: A Biography of Max Warren* (London, 1980), passim.

24. For example, Iverach McDonald, *The History of The Times*, vol. 5 (London, 1984), chap. 14; Patrick Keatley, *The Politics of Partnership* (Harmondsworth, 1963); W. P. Kirkman, *Unscrambling an Empire* (London, 1966).

25. Colin Legum, *Must We Lose Africa?* (London, 1954).

26. S. E. Finer, H. B. Berrington, and D. J. Bartholomew, *Backbench Opinion in the House of Commons, 1955–59* (London, 1961), pp. 86–90.

27. Miles Kahler, *Decolonization in Britain and France* (Princeton, 1984), p. 158.

28. On all this see Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues*, passim.

moving on to a commitment to one man one vote in the colonies,²⁹ but by the end of the decade this was being espoused by the influential Conservative Bow Group as well.³⁰

Yet, in spite of all this public support in Britain for African freedom and the Colonial Office's urgent planning in the middle and late 1940s, it is false to believe it was Britain that made the running in Africa's decolonization. British preoccupations in these matters principally served to prepare Britain itself to meet rather more surefootedly than it might otherwise have done the nationalist onrush with which it was shortly confronted. As its officials and ministers discovered, they had not framed, as they thought, mechanisms for fostering independence creatively and deliberately but, in the upshot, expedients to which to turn in their hurry as their colonialist feet slipped from under them. It was, for example, highly convenient that they should have fashioned a whole new sequence of multiple constitutional steps forward (in place of the old stately three-stage progression from Crown Colony to Dominion status) before they confronted Nkrumah's insistent demand for "self-government now," even if they found themselves forced to speed these along a great deal faster than they had ever originally contemplated. It was that availability which enabled them to permit Nkrumah after 1951 to move swiftly from "leader of government business" to chief minister, to prime minister, and to full control of the Gold Coast's internal government by means of "tactical action" rather than his earlier vociferous "positive action." That in turn helped to reinforce the impression that it could well prove possible to move the British (as they had ultimately been moved in South Asia) by a Gandhi-like oscillation between active agitation and temporising accommodation, rather than by resorting to armed conflict as had so fruitlessly been done by the Mau Mau in Kenya.³¹

In three other respects, however, Britain's new policies of the late 1940s fairly certainly made their task very much harder than it might otherwise have been—at any rate if one considers their experience in Africa taken as a whole. In the first place their concern with development led to a great increase in the number of British officials, especially of departmental and technical officers, in the capitals and district centres of their colonial territories. It led also, to an often striking degree, to a variety of authoritarian measures, particularly in respect of what they believed to be rural reform: better cropping patterns, cattle inoculation, anti-erosion terracing. This amounted to a second colonial

29. *Ibid.*, p. 336.

30. The impressions of the Kenyan European leader about this are in Michael Blundell, *So Rough a Wind* (London, 1964), pp. 255–56.

31. Austin, *Politics in Ghana*.

invasion that was deeply resented by, and frequently deeply offensive to, its colonial peoples. The well-meaning attempt to assuage the economic consequences of the depression, the war, and their aftermath thus regularly backfired.³²

Second, the fostering of democratically elected local councils often backfired too. There was little commitment there to all the development purposes they were meant to serve. Their prospective role as electoral colleges was soon abandoned. More seriously, their early politicization led to a fateful undermining of the power of the formally collaborating chiefs. As a result these chiefs ceased to be the instruments of imperial diktats, and, in the absence of anything in their place—the great increase in European administrative officers in Kenya in the Mau Mau and post-Mau Mau years in Kenya during the 1950s suggests the possible alternative—imperial control of so many a local area was soon being quite simply lost.³³ And then third, whereas in the aftermath of a spate of strikes all over Africa during the late 1940s the British made considerable efforts to foster functionally separated, organizationally circumscribed trade unions, African leaders frequently came to employ these as organs of anti-colonial protest, as Tom Mboya's career in Kenya (and Sékou Touré's in Guinea) so strikingly illustrated.³⁴ These various ingredients then variously coalesced. Protests against well-intentioned but harshly imposed soil-conservation measures conjoined, for example, with widespread dismay at the enlarged European presence; and whereas representative councils and assisted trade unions had been planned to moderate volatile elements, they more often provided vehicles for articulating and spearheading unassuaged discontents and rising ambitions all the more vigorously.³⁵

But in searching for the propellants of Africa's insistent nationalism in the post-Second World War years one must look in three further directions as well. If the experience of African troops during the Second World War outside their home areas and often outside tropical Africa itself may not have bred quite the crucial cohorts of African nationalists that was once suggested, it assuredly provided one of the many channels through which Africans' increasing awareness of the independence that was coming to others would have

32. For example, D. A. Low and J. M. Lonsdale, introduction to Low and Smith, *History of East Africa*, vol. 3, pp. 12–16; *Report of the Nyasaland Commission of Enquiry* (the Devlin Report), Cmnd 814 (London, 1959), p. 19; R. Young and H. Fosbrooke, *Land and Politics among the Luguru of Tanganyika* (London, 1960), chap. 7.

33. For example, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Management of the Teso District Council: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Disturbances in the Eastern Province*, 1960 (Entebbe, 1960).

34. David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya* (Nairobi, 1982).

35. For example, Cherry Gertzel, *Party and Locality in Northern Uganda, 1945–1962* (London, 1974).

traveled. All these channels, in ways hard to count, will have helped generate the powerful combination of excitement at what might be attained and dismay at what was still being endured that were the principal components of Africa's nationalisms, as of so many others.

Nationalism was fueled, too, to a degree that has not perhaps been sufficiently appreciated, by a long-gathering and widespread discontent. This had already reared its head in the 1930s in strikes and coffee holdups in many urban and rural centres. These discontents were the seemingly unremitting consequences of the world slump in the 1930s, which were then compounded by the dislocations and deprivations of the Second World War and the inflation and persisting shortages thereafter. If we consider only the remarkably detailed evidence of the malaise all this set up in the minds of West Africa's colonial administrators, it takes little imagination to visualize the still deeper discontents it generated in so many African minds even before one goes on to consider the abundant evidence of strikes, riots, demonstrations, *et hoc genus omne* following the war. Paradoxically, these animosities were then given a substantial stir by the passing euphoria that accompanied the Korean War boom in the early and mid-1950s, only to be greatly compounded once again by the sharp economic downturn when the boom collapsed.³⁶ The accompanying discontents were extensively expressed in Africa's innumerable nationalist parties, of which the Rassemblement Democratique Africain founded in French West Africa in 1946 was at one time the most extensive.

Yet by contrast with their most powerful Asian counterparts, such as the Indian National Congress, or the Communist party of China, or smaller movements such as Sukarno's Partai National Indonesie, these African nationalist parties were often markedly less substantial than the eruptive movements propelling them forward. Upon this matter detailed studies of the lower Congo, the Geita district in Tanganyika, some villages in Northern Rhodesia, and other places besides, provide clear evidence that by the late 1950s vibrant rural radicalism with a decidedly nationalist thrust had become widespread.³⁷ There was considerable urban radicalism too (of which Ghana's much-noted "verandah boys" had been only one expression). But in essence this turbulence was essentially "subaltern" (as, after Gramsci, it is now being termed in Indian studies).³⁸ It was not principally, as imperial rulers were apt to

36. For example, A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (London, 1973), chap. 7; J. D. Y. Peel, "Social and Cultural Change," in *Cambridge History of Africa*, vol. 8, chap. 4.

37. Herbert Weiss, *Political Protest in the Congo* (Princeton, 1967); G. Andrew Maguire, *Towards "Uhuru" in Tanzania* (Cambridge, England, 1969); Thomas Rasmussen, "The Popular Basis of Anti-Colonial Protest," in W. Tordoff, *Politics in Zambia* (Manchester, 1974), chap. 2; D. A. Low, *Buganda in Modern History*, (London, 1971), chap. 5; Gertzel, *Northern Uganda*.

38. Ranajit Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies*, vols. 1-3 (Delhi, 1982-1984).

claim, an elite contrivance. It could be narrowly confined (in place or issue), spread over a larger area, more generally suffused or concentrated in one category of persons, episodic or persistent. Induced by the surge of hopes and angers now sweeping through Africa, it was essentially a populist, often a disaggregated, phenomenon. What it meant was that by the late 1950s African nationalist leaders were not having to mobilize cowed, apathetic, or disinterested populaces (as the Asian movements certainly sometimes needed to do). Rather, their largest concerns were frequently to establish some measure of control over a multiplicity of populist expressions of anti-colonial ambition and discontent that were now pullulating in Africa, so as to utilise these to promote their centrally focused nationalist cause. It was as much in an effort to capture such forces as to advance them that Nkrumah so trenchantly exclaimed: "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all the rest shall be added unto you." In the immediate post-independence years the authoritarianism to which so many nationalist leaders succumbed owed a great deal to their baffled anxiety to hold the lid on the plethora of localized agitational propensities that were then surrounding them. In the terminal colonial years the daunting prospect of having to contain the profusion of disturbances now confronting them in Africa baffled, dismayed, and ultimately quite threw off balance their British, French, and Belgian predecessors.

It was certainly in response to the palpable evidence of such continent-wide eruptions in the late 1950s that Harold Macmillan, Britain's Conservative prime minister, echoed the words of his predecessor, Stanley Baldwin, over India in 1934, and repeated his own remarks at Bedford in England in 1957, when he declared to the South African Parliament in February 1960 that "the wind of change is blowing through this Continent."³⁹ At larger levels, both Nkrumah and the South African prime minister were by now seeking to turn their countries into free-standing republics. In the months thereabouts, de Gaulle was bending before the wind in West Africa (as Macmillan quickly appreciated) and was evidently preparing to pull out of Algeria as well. The Belgians were battling with the sudden storm overwhelming them in the Congo. The British themselves were already yielding to pressures even in tiny British Somaliland. In East Africa, despite having suppressed Kenya's Mau Mau revolt, the pressures against them were in many ways building up as never before. There were salient popular disturbances in both Uganda and Tanganyika and serious riots in all three of Britain's Central African territories.⁴⁰ Guerrilla attacks were beginning to be launched in Portugal's African

39. K. Middlemas and J. Barnes, *Baldwin* (London, 1969), p. 713. The essentials of Macmillan's February 1960 speech are in N. Mansergh, ed., *Documents and Speeches on Commonwealth Affairs, 1952-62* (London, 1963), pp. 347-51.

40. Maguire, "Uhuru" in *Tanzania*; Low, *Buganda*, pp. 156-58; Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*, pp. 282ff.

territories; while dramatic encounters were soon occurring in South Africa too, at Sharpeville and Langa especially. "We have seen the awakening of national consciousness," Harold Macmillan told the South African Parliament in February 1960, "in peoples who have for centuries lived in dependence on some other power. Fifteen years ago this movement spread through Asia. . . . Today the same thing is happening in Africa. . . . In different places it may take different forms. But it is happening everywhere."⁴¹

All of which now entailed major problems in sustaining control over the agitational forces that had been loosed. These were indeed affecting both the imperialists and many nationalist leaders alike (Kaunda in Central Africa would be a clear example of the latter). While to some repression seemed the only sensible answer—the Portuguese were shortly to take this line in Angola as, momentarily, did the Central African Federation's prime minister too—all Asian experience, and all the killings in Algeria and later in Portuguese Africa and Rhodesia, unarguably demonstrated that ultimately this was an appallingly worthless course.⁴² Sharper minds accordingly calculated that if searing debacles were to be avoided the wiser course could be to move into early independence and leave the upshot to Africa's impatient nationalists.

The supreme irony now was that it was principally the British, who had hitherto preened themselves on being the first to respond to these pressures, and had not therefore fallen into the traps others had dug for themselves, who now faced the largest crisis in Africa. For while they had just about successfully managed to keep themselves ahead of the waves of disorder they might have faced in West Africa, from which France in West Africa had just escaped too, but which were now overwhelming the Belgians, the persistence of British rule in East and Central Africa, particularly under the increasingly specious banner of "partnership," now left them uniquely exposed to the winds of change there in precisely the manner they had always hitherto assiduously sought to avoid. There had been some hope, indeed an expectation, that, rather as there had been a ten-year hiatus between independence in South Asia and independence in Malaya, so, at the very least, there would be a similar interlude between independence in British West Africa and independence in the rest of British Africa. But it was not to be. The dominoes were continuing to fall. Along the East African coast Somalia became independent in 1960, as did the Malagasy Republic too.

Britain's appalling miscalculation rested on its failure to appreciate three if not four immensely potent circumstances. First, as we have implied, it was just not the case that postwar African nationalism was principally a West

41. Mansergh, *Documents and Speeches*, pp. 347–51.

42. D. Birmingham and T. Ranger, "Settlers and Liberators in the South," in D. Birmingham and P. M. Martin, *History of Central Africa* (London, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 341–45.

African phenomenon. It was simultaneously erupting right across the continent. That was hardly to be wondered at. Even in the 1940s nationalist agitation had been as vigorous in Kenya, for example, as in the Gold Coast. By any standards Kenyatta stood senior to Nkrumah in the nationalist cause. The point was then underlined by the weight of East and Central African attendance at Nkrumah's All African Peoples' Conference in Accra in December 1958. Second, the fact that by 1960 so much of West Africa had become independent naturally intensified the dismay in the rest of the continent that in order simply to meet the inordinate ambitions of the European settlers, East and Central Africa were to be treated differently. That in turn brought into even sharper focus the dire fact that the overwhelming reason for this distinction was quintessentially racial; as the British Somaliland outcome pinpointed, where there were no white settlers in East Africa, the British could bring themselves to grant independence as precipitously as anyone. And fourth, far from having reached its apogee with the upheaval in the Congo, the momentum of change that had spread outward from Ghana was still, if anything, mounting to its peak. In particular in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland the fear was now rampant that the federal constitutional-review conference lately advanced to 1960 would lead to the clamping of white supremacy over its black population forever, unless they were now to erupt against this. The altogether disconcerting fact was that for all Britain's hitherto remarkably successful attempts in its confrontations with African nationalism to be quick off the mark, there were now much greater threats of anti-colonial violence in Eastern and Central Africa than it had ever encountered in West Africa.⁴³

By 1959–1960 the British in East and Central Africa accordingly found themselves caught badly out on a limb with dangerous deeps below it. Their “partnership” doctrine in particular was under the severest possible challenges. Were it to be held to, the cover it provided for special privileges for those of white skin would be brutally hounded at home and abroad; African rebellion against it could be assured of global applause. Yet were it to be abandoned, imprecations of treachery, cowardice, and worse from the whites in Africa would ring in the Conservative government's ears. Another Congo-type collapse would certainly be laid at its door. The white minorities might, moreover, take the law into their own hands. (That had already been threatened more than once; Macmillan became keenly anxious about the possibility of a Central African Boston tea party.)⁴⁴

The situation was made none the easier because of other surrounding

43. Rotberg, *Nationalism in Central Africa*.

44. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, pp. 262–63; Clyde Sanger, *Central African Emergency* (London, 1960), pp. 246–47.

circumstances. Once the fateful attempt to impose Britain's will upon Colonel Nasser's Egypt had decisively collapsed in the disastrous Suez affair in 1956, Britain's policy makers were neither of a mind nor in a state to advance strategic or commercial reasons why Eastern and central Africa should be held at whatever cost. Kenya's settler leader, Michael Blundell, was told by a friendly Conservative that "the British Cabinet lost its collective nerve after Suez and decided to climb out of any situations which might involve them in critical escapades overseas."⁴⁵ It would have been closer to the mark to have said that following the Suez aberration the Conservative government saw the wisdom of its Labour predecessor's "grand strategy" of nonintervention and the conciliation of the moderate nationalists which British policy makers had previously consistently held to, even through the major Anglo-Iranian crisis of 1951.⁴⁶ To that, as early as May 1959, Macmillan added the warning to Blundell that "the only possible policy was a liberal one . . . any Government of Great Britain could not carry with it for long the people on any policy which had not a strong moral conviction in issues of this sort."⁴⁷ The issue, moreover, could no longer be balked. Macmillan no doubt had part of his mind elsewhere—on Europe, the British nuclear deterrent, and the American alliance.⁴⁸ "But what remains in my mind," he later wrote, "is the immense amount of time and trouble taken over the future of the African territories amidst so many other baffling problems, internal and external."⁴⁹

Already on the ground the erosion of Britain's partnership commitments in East Africa had by 1959 incrementally proceeded far. As early as 1952 Uganda—gratuitously hustled under the "partnership" banner just a short while previously—had to be acknowledged as "a primarily African country," even if there were still to be special safeguards for minorities. By the time of the so-called Namirembe Agreement with Buganda in 1954 it was clear that Uganda could look forward to African majority rule, and in 1959 its Wild Committee on constitutional reform delivered the coup de grâce by advocating a common roll in which Uganda's Europeans and Asians would be swiftly submerged.⁵⁰ In the meantime, in 1955, in small but symbolically important Zanzibar, Britain's attempt to maintain even there the multiracial ideal by providing special representation for the hitherto governing Arab minority was totally undermined when the younger Arab nationalists, early perceiving the long-

45. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, p. 267.

46. Louis, *Middle East*, p. 5.

47. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, pp. 262–63.

48. R. F. Holland, *European Decolonization, 1918–1981* (London, 1985), pp. 204–07.

49. Harold Macmillan, *Pointing the Way, 1959–61* (London, 1972), p. 150.

50. Low, *Buganda*, chaps. 4–6.

term dangers in any such arbitrarily protected role, and gambling on their ability to hold their own in the future, forcefully demanded that common-roll elections should be introduced in Zanzibar too, and in the years that followed they eventually had their way.⁵¹

Meanwhile Tanganyika, under its imperious governor, Sir Edward Twining, was in the throes of a sustained British attempt to press it into an equally balanced, multiracial "partnership" mode, with one European and one Asian for every African representative despite the huge population disparities. But as a consequence, by the late 1950s there was in Tanganyika more overt opposition to British colonial rule there than anywhere else in East Africa. The Tanganyika Africa National Union had been founded in 1954. In 1958 its leader, Julius Nyerere, then seized on the fact that in the impending legislative elections it would be possible for TANU to win a complete ascendancy if, instead of boycotting their multiracial procedures, it exploited the fact that Africans could vote for the candidates required of other races so as to ensure that only those who supported its larger cause would win their seats. TANU's triumph along precisely these lines drove a coach and four through Twining's multiracial concoction. By 1959 the new governor, Turnbull, despite being an old Kenya hand, was insistent that he had no power to resist the ensuing demand for African majority rule.⁵² By then Kenya alone of Britain's East African territories remained formally enmeshed in the multiracial web; and at the beginning of 1959 its African members began a concerted boycott of its Legislative Council.

That year then saw the foundations of Britain's East and central-African policies being shaken as never before by two occurrences that unnerved even its most conservative supporters. The largest upheaval against British rule in Africa had been by Kenya's Mau Mau revolt that had broken out openly in 1952. Since its supporters had shown themselves ready to kill, British public opinion had generally supported the use of military force against them, and by 1956-1957 its back had been largely broken. But by 1959 numbers of Mau Mau supporters remained in detention, and in Kenya's Hola camp there was in that year a rash of killings by brutal and insensitive warders. When the news leaked out, Britain's parliamentarians, from the Left to the Right, were deeply outraged: perhaps the most potent denunciation was made by the former Conservative minister Enoch Powell.⁵³ Meanwhile in the same year there had been, as we shall see, widespread riots in Nyasaland to the south. A report by the Devlin Commission subsequently criticised the colony's administra-

51. Michael F. Lofchie, *Zanzibar: Background to Revolution* (Princeton, 1965).

52. John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), chaps. 15-16.

53. *Hansard* (Commons) 1959, vol. 610, cols. 232-37; Charles Douglas-Home, *Evelyn Baring: The Last Proconsul* (London, 1978), chap. 29.

tion for overreacting and accused it of creating a "police state."⁵⁴ These two events together served to supercharge the major debate that was now being generated in Britain (of an order that its African decolonisation story had never seen previously) over the whole future of its former commitment to multiracial regimes in East and Central Africa, particularly as these entailed extraordinary privileges for white settlers. For if continued British dominion in East and Central Africa entailed consequences like these, the British people were increasingly disinclined to have any more of it. Books, especially on the Central African situation, came tumbling from the press where they line the shelves as testimony to the debate's intensity.⁵⁵ Almost uniformly they argued in support of the position of the churches, the quality press, and even significant sections of the Conservative party that without further ado Britain should now carry through in East and Central Africa what it, France, Belgium, and Italy were already completing everywhere else in Africa.

Early in 1959 the Conservative government's second colonial secretary, Lennox-Boyd, had summoned his East African governors to a meeting at the prime minister's country house at Chequers. They knew very well by then that a change of pace was required in East Africa. By all reports they agreed that they should now plan on Tanganyika's becoming independent in about 1970, Kenya in 1975, and Uganda sometime in between. They agreed too that any head-on collision with African nationalists that might involve the use of force must be avoided.⁵⁶

In October 1959 there was a general election in Britain that returned the Conservatives to power. Lennox-Boyd now retired, and he was succeeded by an able, ambitious, younger Tory, Iain Macleod. Although new to colonial issues, Macleod immediately sensed that such were the tides now flowing in Africa that the Chequers timetable of just a few months previously was already almost hopelessly out of date. He was later to write:

The situation in autumn, 1959 was grim. . . . Perhaps the tragedy of the Hola camp, even more than the "murder plot" emergency in Nyasaland, was decisive. . . . It has been said that after I became Colonial Secretary there was a deliberate speeding up of the movement towards independence. I agree. There was. And in my view any other policy

54. Cmnd 814, *Nyasaland Commission of Enquiry*.

55. E.g., Philip Mason, *Year of Decision* (London, 1960); R. Gray, *The Two Nations* (London, 1960); Edward Clegg, *Race and Politics* (Oxford, 1960); C. Leys and C. Pratt, *A New Deal in Central Africa* (London, 1960); Sanger, *Central African Emergency*; C. E. Lucas Phillips, *The Vision Splendid* (London, 1960).

56. *Observer*, 1 February 1959; Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, pp. 261–62; Douglas-Home, Evelyn Baring, p. 283.

would have led to terrible bloodshed in Africa. . . . Were the countries fully ready for independence? Of course not. . . . [But] we could not possibly have held by force our territories in Africa. . . . The march of men towards freedom can be guided, but not halted. Of course there are risks in moving quickly. But the risks of moving slowly were far greater.⁵⁷

For British policy makers the position in which they now found themselves was deeply humiliating: Not merely were they being left far behind those they had always believed to be much less sensitive and skillful decolonisers. ("Do you know what that means?" Macleod remarked when he heard that the Belgians had decided to quit the Congo. "We are going to be the last in the colonial sphere instead of the first.")⁵⁸ They were now faced by nationalisms whose especially vehement impatience was being angrily driven by being denied, for principally racial reasons, a legitimate outlet. There was every prospect, moreover, of violence erupting on a scale the available British forces would be stretched to control, or regime collapses whose possible human costs were dreadful to contemplate, or both. Above all they were being forced to jettison all that remained of their careful planning in the late 1940s for an orderly progression toward decolonisation. In October 1959 one governor wrote to another: "It looks to me as though we have 'had' Africa"; it only remained to "do all we can to make them ready between now and then; and then leave them to the denizens and to the human misery that will result for most of them."⁵⁹ Given the main thrust of the public debate now being conducted in Britain (and in African, American, and international quarters as well), that meant they had now to face not simply the abandonment of the policy of partnership to which they had been strongly committed for a decade past. They had actually to contemplate rolling this back in the face of bitter recriminations by those white political leaders, especially in Kenya and the Rhodesias, who were quick to denounce any such volte face as unabashed treachery, and who were understandably dismayed at seeing all that they had worked for—and had, even quite lately, confidently expected to obtain—being wrenched from their grasp by men of whose stance they could no longer be sure and whose word they soon found difficulty in trusting.⁶⁰ For Britain's Conservative prime minister and his successive colonial secretaries the general position then became still more troublesome because of the growth after

57. *Weekend Telegraph*, 12 March 1965; *Spectator*, 31 January 1964. On this whole issue, Dan Horowitz, "Attitudes of British Conservatives towards Colonization in Africa," *African Affairs* 69 (Jan. 1970): 9–26.

58. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, p. 271.

59. Crawford to Baring, in Douglas-Home, *Evelyn Baring*, p. 285.

60. This is the burden of Roy Welensky, *Welensky's 4,000 Days* (London, 1964).

1960 of a small but influential group within their own party that was increasingly hostile to the course they themselves felt impotent to avoid. While there were those in the Conservative party who generally felt the settlers should fend for themselves (as one Bow Grouper crudely put it, "What do I care about the f . . . ing settlers, let them bloody well look after themselves")⁶¹ there was also the fact, as Macmillan himself remarked, that "Lord Salisbury and Lord Lambton would easily rally a 'settler' lobby of considerable power."⁶²

Given this context it was Macmillan's "wind of change" speech, primarily directed at the South African regime, that provided the lifeline for Macleod and allowed him to do what he now believed had to be done. "A series of Dunkirks, of gallant, prolonged, bitter rearguard actions" would, he believed, be futile.⁶³ "The fences will get higher," he averred, "if we do not take them now."⁶⁴ In April 1959 his predecessor, Lennox-Boyd, had said he could not foresee any date "at which it will be possible for any British Government to surrender their ultimate responsibilities for the destinies and well being of Kenya."⁶⁵ Having finally terminated in November 1959 the emergency under which Kenya had been living since the Mau Mau outbreak seven years before, in January 1960 Macleod presided over a constitutional conference on Kenya at Lancaster House in London. There, on 1 February 1960, he eventually took the bull by the horns and outlined changes that could only ensure that before very long African majority rule would replace the white-dominated multi-racialism in Kenya and that independence for Kenya on these lines would not be indefinitely delayed thereafter.⁶⁶ Two days later Macmillan sanctioned this approach when he told the South African Parliament: "The growth of national consciousness in Africa is a political fact and we must accept it as such. This means, I would judge, that we must come to terms with it."⁶⁷ Blundell, the Kenya settler leader, explained to the Central African Federation's prime minister, Welensky, that "developments around us in Tanganyika, the Congo, Uganda and British Somalia make it almost impossible for us to hold back."⁶⁸ But he was soon conceding to Macleod that in Kenya "all the jealous racial questions have just gone . . . the alternative to Lancaster House for Kenya was an explosion."⁶⁹ There were still problems over Kenya to come—

61. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, p. 266.

62. Harold Macmillan, *At the End of the Day, 1961–1963* (London, 1973), p. 290.

63. Nigel Fisher, *Iain Macleod* (London, 1973), p. 145.

64. Sanger, *Central African Emergency*, p. 311.

65. *Hansard* (Commons) 1959, vol. 604, col. 563.

66. Fisher, *Macleod*, pp. 144–48; Goldsworthy, *Mboya*, pp. 131–36.

67. Mansergh, *Documents and Speeches*, pp. 347–51.

68. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, p. 279.

69. Fisher, *Macleod*, p. 148.

the conflict between KADU and KANU; the debate and delay over the release of Kenyatta; a further Lancaster House conference in London in 1962; and a pre-independence election in 1963. In December 1961 Macmillan was chafing over the dilemma that "if we have to give independence to Kenya, it may well prove another Congo. If we hold on, it will mean a long and cruel campaign."⁷⁰ But in fact it was neither. It was immensely important to the outcome that, in Kenyatta, Kenya had a widely supported nationalist leader, who even held out an olive branch to the settlers, and at the end of 1963 Britain gratefully transferred power to him.

By then Tanganyika and Uganda were independent too, and Zanzibar's independence was to follow very shortly. Seeing Nyerere and TANU now comfortably entrenched as Tanganyika's single nationalist party, Macleod was anxious to press ahead there as swiftly as he could. Further elections were held in Tanganyika in September 1960. A final constitutional conference was called (unusually, outside London) in Dar-es-Salaam in March 1961, and independence for Tanganyika eventuated in December that year. Uganda was more complicated, owing to the determination first of the Baganda and then of the other southern-Ugandan kingdoms to establish a federal constitution. There were talks in London in September 1960, and a full constitutional conference just a year later. The arrangements made had little to commend them, but Uganda became independent on 9 October 1962. Zanzibar had serious internal problems too that were in no way settled by the time independence came to it. But it likewise had a Lancaster House conference in London in 1962 and became independent at the end of 1963.⁷¹

Having by 1960 reestablished Britain's credibility as a responsive decoloniser, in particular by having finally broken white settler dominance in Kenya, Macleod secured just a little more leverage, and time, for the unscrambling of Britain's East African empire than the Belgians had had in the Congo. Most of the earlier ideas of preparing colonies for independence went by the board. The opportunity was principally used to settle a little more securely, by means of national elections (more than one if necessary), the successions to power at independence. In both Uganda and Zanzibar the conclusions reached soon disastrously collapsed, in the Zanzibar revolt of January 1964 and in Obote's coup in Uganda in 1966.⁷² But at least, from the British point of view, there was not (as yet) widespread disaster on the Congo's scale. The principal danger of this, as Macmillan had seen, had been in Kenya, where a widespread African grab for land, and a precipitate departure by

70. Macmillan, *End of the Day*, p. 291.

71. Low and Smith, *History of East Africa*, vol. 3, chaps. 1-4.

72. Lofchie, *Zanzibar*, pp. 257-81; Low, *Buganda*, chap. 7.

Kenya's whites, might together have created the kind of Congo-type disaster that would have threatened the very future of the Conservative government among its own supporters (Maudling, Macleod's successor as colonial secretary, feared there might be "a bloody shambles").⁷³ Late in 1960 a grievous twist in the Congo crisis, centering on Katanga's possible secession, gave Macmillan his most anxious days during these years. He dreaded their repetition in a Kenyan collapse. Accordingly, and well nigh uniquely, several millions of British taxpayers' money was made available to a Kenyan Land and Settlement Development Board to enable it to act as a broker between land-hungry blacks without resources and settlers demanding cash for their properties. This arrangement triumphantly served the government's dual purpose of preventing a Congo crisis in Kenya and the bitter conflict within the Conservative party that would certainly have ensued.⁷⁴

Yet East Africa had never been the center of Britain's African crisis. Macleod's principal test had in the meanwhile been in Nyasaland.⁷⁵ In June 1958 Hastings Banda had returned there after forty-two years abroad to assume the leadership of the Nyasaland African Congress. Its primary objective was to secure Nyasaland's secession from the white-dominated Federation. By early 1959, because Britain was seen to be dragging its feet over constitutional reforms within Nyasaland itself, demonstrations and riots were spreading there. To halt these Welensky, the Federation's prime minister, decided in February 1959 to fly in Southern Rhodesian troops to Nyasaland.⁷⁶ On 3 March Banda and some two hundred of his supporters were arrested and soon accused of plotting to murder Nyasaland's whites. In the accompanying disturbances, more than fifty blacks were killed. It was a crucial moment. For Welensky was demonstrating that conceptually there was an alternative to the policy the British government was pursuing: force could be used to repress nationalist movements (as the much more impoverished Portuguese were to do so harshly in Angola just two years later).⁷⁷ But as the immediate outcry in Britain against any such proceeding (that came to be embodied in the Devlin Report on the Nyasaland disturbances)⁷⁸ made very plain, Macmillan and his colleagues found themselves in no position to take the Welensky route, even if

73. Macmillan, *End of the Day*, p. 291, and *Pointing the Way*, chap. 16.

74. Gary Wasserman, *Politics of Decolonization: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue, 1960–1965* (Cambridge, England, 1976)—though this seems to me to miss the main point: see, e.g., Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*, pp. 276, 286, 307.

75. Sanger, *Central African Emergency*, passim.

76. Welensky, *4,000 Days*, pp. 118–21.

77. E.g., Gerald J. Bender, *Angola under the Portuguese* (London, 1978), chap. 6.

78. Cmd 814, *Nyasaland Commission of Enquiry*.

they had wanted to (which they did not). "I cannot guarantee," Macmillan shortly informed Welensky, "that British troops would undertake the kind of duties that would be necessary."⁷⁹

Macleod's crucial move then came in April 1960 when he released Banda from prison, invited him to London, and entered into negotiations with him. By August 1961 the renamed Malawi Congress Party overwhelmingly won Nyasaland's ensuing general election. In November 1962 there was one of the now customary Lancaster House conferences in London, and a month later the British conceded that Nyasaland might secede from the Federation. Six years to the day since he had returned to his country, Banda saw Malawi become independent on 6 July 1964.

As we have noted, an agreement had been reached back in 1957 to hold a review of the Federation's constitution in 1960. Following the disturbances not only in Nyasaland but elsewhere in the Federation early in 1959, Macmillan decided to establish first an advisory commission, eventually under Lord Monckton's chairmanship, to report on the situation before this review was undertaken.⁸⁰ He tried to appoint some Labour members to it, but since, in deference to Welensky, he declined to allow it to consider dismantling the Federation, the Labour party refused to cooperate.⁸¹ Monckton and his colleagues thereupon began work in February 1960 and reported in the following September. "African distrust" of the Federation, they then wrote, "has reached an intensity impossible, in our opinion, to dispel without drastic and fundamental changes," and they went on, despite Macmillan's original curb on them, but in full accord with the considerable slippage in British attitudes at the time, to insert the fateful recommendation "that Her Majesty's Government should make a declaration of intention to consider a request from the Government of a Territory to secede from the Federation."⁸² It was this that opened the door to Nyasaland's eventual departure just two years later.

From Welensky's point of view Nyasaland's departure was a bad precedent, but its participation was in no way crucial to the Federation's continuance. Northern Rhodesia's was. Without it there would be no wealth to be drawn from its extensive copper mines, and the Federation would be confined to Southern Rhodesia only. The principal battle of these years accordingly turned on whether or not Northern Rhodesia would remain in the Federation.

79. Welensky, *4,000 Days*, p. 324.

80. Lord Birkenhead, *Walter Monckton* (London, 1969), chaps. 33–35.

81. Philip Williams, *Hugh Gaitskell* (London, 1979), pp. 483–85, 679–82.

82. *Report on the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1960), Cmnd 1148, paras. 74, 300.

From before the inception of the Federation African opinion there had been strongly aroused against it. But Northern Rhodesia's nationalist forces were not only overridden—during the 1950s they became all but fatally divided. Nevertheless, by March 1959 there were widespread disturbances, and leading officials of Northern Rhodesia's Zambia Congress were arrested. As early as January 1960, however, their release was ordered, and Kenneth Kaunda then set about welding together the new United National Independence Party as no other Northern Rhodesian African party had ever been before—and no Southern Rhodesian African party was ever to be thereafter. In December 1960 he was persuaded to attend the federal review conference in London, pursuant upon the Monckton Commission's report, on condition that the existing Northern Rhodesian constitution would at the same time be reconsidered. That precipitated the major encounter over Northern Rhodesia which spread through all of 1961 and beyond.⁸³

Reconsideration of Northern Rhodesia's constitution was now of central importance. For if this were to end with the existing white domination being maintained, the Federation might just survive, but there would almost certainly be a major black upheaval. If on the other hand white domination could be crucially undermined, black majority rule and the Federation's collapse were well nigh assured (though, as always, Rhodesia's whites might well take the law into their own hands). As the issues became joined, so the tensions rose, and not least in the minds of Britain's decision makers. The federal review conference soon proved abortive. The Africans simply walked out. There was then much to-ing and fro-ing between central Africa and London, and at one stage Welensky mobilised Southern Rhodesia's white territorial troops as a threat against London. Meanwhile there was mounting opposition toward Macleod in the Conservative party. In February 1961 Lord Salisbury denounced him in the House of Lords for "being too clever by half," and in the Commons an "early day motion" was put down by a former Conservative minister that implicitly criticised Macleod by calling for Northern Rhodesia's "nonracial" representation to be maintained; at one stage it attracted the signatures of more than a hundred conservative MPs.⁸⁴ But there were loud voices on the other side too. On 14 February the *Times*, for example, declared that "for the British Government the path of wisdom in this era of revolutionary change in Africa lies in going ahead, coolly and inflexibly."

On 15 February 1961 Harold Macmillan began his weekly letter as prime minister to the queen: "Since I last wrote to your Majesty on 7 February," he

⁸³ Rotberg, *Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, passim.

⁸⁴ Fisher, *Macleod*, pp. 170–73; Finer, Berrington, Bartholomew, *Backbench Opinion*, pp. 125–26; Kahler, *Decolonization*, p. 146.

told her, "I have had to devote nearly all my time to the Northern Rhodesian Constitutional Conference," and elsewhere he recorded:

If we lean too much to the European side,

1. [African] confidence in Her Majesty's Government will be undermined.
2. There will be serious disorder in Northern Rhodesia, perhaps spreading throughout the Federation.
3. [Some Ministers] will resign.
4. Our Government and party will be split in two.

If, on the other hand, we make a decision which, without satisfying African demands, goes in their general favour,

1. Europeans will have no faith left in Her Majesty's Government.
2. Sir Roy Welensky will declare Federation to be "independent" and will try to take over Government of Northern Rhodesia by force or bluff or both.
3. If the Governor defends his position, there will be civil war—Europeans versus British officials, troops and Africans.
4. [Other Ministers] will resign.
5. Our Government and Party will be split in two.⁸⁵

In the event, Macleod on 21 February announced proposals that went the African way. Yet by 24 February Macmillan was deeply troubled. "We are preparing," he wrote, "for the worst event in Rhodesia—that is open rebellion. We are drawing up the necessary . . . plans, if the worst should occur."⁸⁶ But they did not occur, essentially because the government now bent before the pressure which, with much Conservative support, Welensky mobilised against it; and on 26 July Macleod was obliged to issue new proposals that went Welensky's way. In the run-up to these Macmillan recorded: "By a miracle, we have achieved a solution of the immediate crisis. Both Sandys [the commonwealth secretary] and Macleod have agreed and so—under pressure—has Welensky. So the Conservative Party . . . are calm and united on the issue."⁸⁷ No doubt they were; but Northern Rhodesia's blacks, correctly understanding what had now happened, erupted as never before. Government buildings, such as schools and workshops, were set alight. Bridges were cut. Roads were blocked. Northern Rhodesia was fast slipping out of colonial control. Thanks to Kaunda's pleas, no whites other than the security forces were attacked. But three thousand arrests were made, and twenty-five hundred blacks were sent to prison. To Welensky's fury, howev-

⁸⁵ Macmillan, *End of the Day*, p. 309.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 311.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 317.

er, since he could readily sense what was implied, Macleod on 13 September then announced that only when such disturbances ceased would the constitutional proposals be considered further.⁸⁸

In October Macmillan promoted Macleod to the leadership of the House of Commons and put Maudling in his place. "Had I thought there would be some relief in the pressure from the Colonial Office," he was later to record, "I was doomed to disappointment . . . in some respects he seemed *plus royaliste que le roi*."⁸⁹ The Northern Rhodesian disturbances had clearly left their mark. It was soon apparent that the government's July proposals could not be held to, except at a cost Britain was not prepared to pay. So in February 1962 Maudling finally announced some marginal changes in the new constitution for Northern Rhodesia that did contain the possibility of an African majority. In a House of Commons motion forty Conservative MPs still denounced any such moves; but among the rest the Northern Rhodesian disturbances had hit their target. There were two more general elections in Northern Rhodesia, in 1962 and 1964; but on the last day of 1963, following a winding-up conference at the Victoria Falls in the previous July, the Federation disappeared, and in October 1964 Zambia finally became independent.⁹⁰

Throughout these years colonial issues—if one may judge from the regular national opinion polls—were never preeminent in the minds of the British generally. But they did arouse more public interest than usual, and for the most part public opinion seems by this measure to have supported the government's actions.⁹¹ These clearly entailed a wrenching apart of so much that had been fashioned before. That required a determination which probably cost Macleod the leadership of the Conservative party. It required as well all the soothing skills that Macmillan himself could muster and eventually made him call on his second-in-command, R. A. Butler, to head a special Central Africa Office in March 1962.⁹² It also involved the anathemas of Welensky and other white Rhodesian leaders. The outcome ultimately turned on Kaunda's mobilisation of a cohesive UNIP; on the positive impact of the Northern Rhodesian disturbances of late 1961 on the Conservative party; and on Welensky's eventual decision not to take the law into his own hands.

Thus in that part of Central as well as East Africa where direct British colonial rule had persisted, the British in the end, under mounting African pressure, hastily granted independence as they and others had already done in West Africa. They followed this by granting independence (as they were

88. D. C. Mulford, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence* (London, 1967).

89. Macmillan, *End of the Day*, p. 318; Reginald Maudling, *Memoirs* (London, 1978), chap. 7.

90. Mulford, *Zambia*; Lord Alport, *The Sudden Assignment* (London, 1965).

91. National Opinion Polls Ltd, *Political Bulletin*, passim, for these years.

92. Lord Butler, *The Art of the Possible* (London, 1971), chap. 10.

concurrently doing in the West Indies and elsewhere) to the Gambia in 1965, to Botswana and Lesotho in 1966, and to Swaziland and Mauritius in 1968. With that the second sequence in the tropical-African transfer of power was concluded.

There remained, besides the Portuguese territories and of course South Africa, Southern Rhodesia. In 1961 it had obtained a new constitution that, many British Conservatives averred, provided better opportunities for its large black majority, albeit within a country still under white settler control, than they could otherwise have expected. While in London, Joshua Nkomo, Southern Rhodesia's principal nationalist leader at this time, initially agreed to work within the 1961 constitution, but since his associates would have none of this, he eventually joined them in boycotting the ensuing 1962 elections. These were won by the new right-wing white party, the Rhodesian Front, of which Ian Smith became leader in 1964. On the break-up of the Federation, Welensky retired from the fray. Rhodesia, as Southern Rhodesia now became, thereupon inherited most of the Federation's armed forces and under Smith's leadership demanded the total independence that the African countries to its north had now secured. Three British prime ministers in succession, Macmillan, Douglas-Home, and Wilson, made it abundantly clear, however, that without further provision for major advances in the prospects for Rhodesia's blacks there was no chance of any British government granting independence. When in October 1964 the Labour party came into office under Harold Wilson, a spate of fruitless negotiations was undertaken, but on 11 November 1965 Ian Smith eventually proclaimed Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence.⁹³

The tortuous story of the years between 1975 and 1980 on this issue can only be summarized here. In the present context several considerations may nevertheless be emphasized. There were no internal black upheavals in the mid-1960s in (Southern) Rhodesia to turn the tables; Zimbabwe's nationalists were much at odds with each other. From 1964 on their various parties were banned and their leaders imprisoned indefinitely. The Labour government contemplated transferring the issue to the United Nations but found several reasons against this. From the outset Wilson signaled that he would not use force. It has been suggested that Britain's military would have refused to obey him if he had done so, but no evidence has been advanced. During 1964–1966 Wilson's majority was paper thin, though he did not change his tune when it was enlarged in 1966. There was some huffing and puffing within the

93. J. P. Barber, *Rhodesia: The Road to Rebellion* (London, 1967).

Cabinet⁹⁴ (and there are indications that if Gaitskell had lived to be Labour's prime minister rather than Wilson he would have been far more resolute).⁹⁵ But the basic consideration seems to have been that British public opinion was determinedly hostile to the use of force in Rhodesia. When the archbishop of Canterbury suggested that if the government should use this they would deserve public support, there was an outcry against him.⁹⁶ In October 1965 a national opinion poll recorded that only 2 percent of the British public supported the use of armed force against Rhodesia; a further poll in September 1966 showed that this figure had risen to only 16 percent.⁹⁷ Throughout Wilson knew that on this issue the new Conservative leader, Edward Heath, could and would divide the country against him. That would have been a Labour Suez. As it was, in December 1965 the Conservatives ignominiously split three ways over mild sanctions: for and against, with the leadership abstaining.⁹⁸ There is no reason to doubt that these conclusions were imbued with a large element of racism: the British would not support the use of their own troops against their own kith and kin. "They are prepared to see us standing up for what is right," the Labour minister Crossman put it at the time, "but they wouldn't tolerate a war against fellow whitemen who are also British subjects."⁹⁹ It remains true that in the unwinding of empire the British used troops only against Communists (in Malaya) or against those who made it their business to kill (Mau Mau, EOKA, Aden's NLF). The Rhodesians were not *ab initio* in that league.

But if the British were not to use troops, what then about sanctions? Here Britain's response was decidedly half hearted. Some attempt was made to draw up a government "war book,"¹⁰⁰ but on the sanctions issue the Labour Cabinet contained doubters on three scores. Would sanctions really work? Was it sensible to introduce sanctions that others would simply circumvent? Would sanctions not inflict immense damage on the already feeble British pound?¹⁰¹ When some sanctions were imposed, the government sought to check the flow of oil to Rhodesia by means of the navy's Beira patrol; but

94. On this and other such matters see Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government, 1964-1970* (London, 1971); Richard Crossman, *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, 3 vols. (London, 1975-77); Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries, 1964-70* (London, 1984), *passim*.

95. Williams, *Gaitskell*, p. 785.

96. See Crossman's comments, *Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 361.

97. *National Opinion Poll Bulletin*, Special Supplement 1, Rhodesia, Oct. 1965; *ibid.*, Sept. 1966.

98. Philip Norton, *Dissension in the House of Commons, 1974-1979* (Oxford, 1980), p. 455.

99. Crossman, *Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 361.

100. *Castle Diaries, 1964-70*, pp. 28, 60.

101. For example, Crossman, *Diaries*, vol. 3, pp. 69, 91, 142, 698, 744.

nothing was done when it became known that some British oil companies were breaching its rules.¹⁰²

The principal onslaught on Britain's backsliding came instead from the newly enlarged Commonwealth. At the time this was an unexpectedly potent force. Especially during the years when Britain had been impelled to cut its colonial ties in a tearing hurry and to renege on its apparent commitments to its fellow whites on the partnership score, comfort was taken in Britain from the decisions of most of the swiftly decolonised to join the Commonwealth. Macleod (so his liberal Conservative biographer was shortly to write) "saved Africa for the Commonwealth."¹⁰³ In the crucial Commonwealth Conference in 1961 when the future of South Africa's membership of the Commonwealth stood at issue, and Nyerere made it plain that Tanganyika would not join if South Africa remained a member, Macmillan regretfully decided to prefer the new black African membership to continued white South African membership. No Labour government could now turn that choice around, and Wilson thus found himself in the new Commonwealth's line of fire over Rhodesia.

The ranging shots had been fired at the June 1965 Commonwealth Conference, when Nyerere unsuccessfully pressed Wilson to use force against Rhodesia. Soon after UDI Wilson imposed a few selective sanctions. But they did not bite, and to save the day a special Commonwealth Conference—the first to be called outside London—was held in Lagos in June 1966. Wilson only survived this with the statement (which he believed at the time) that sanctions would work in "weeks rather than months." Three months later when they again had not, the bitterest conference of all gathered in London. Wilson was called a racist and felt himself in a vise. He now promised that if Smith did not settle soon, Britain would move for mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia at the United Nations and commit itself to no independence until majority rule had been achieved.¹⁰⁴

On three major (and innumerable lesser) occasions British governments then negotiated with Ian Smith: on *HMS Tiger* in December 1966, on *HMS Fearless* in October 1968, and in the Home-Smith talks of 1971. Though they felt increasingly frustrated and irritated over the Rhodesian issue, they were seeking the impossible. They needed both to entice Smith into a settlement and uphold their verbal commitments to the Commonwealth. They nev-

102. Martin Bailey, *Oilgate, the Sanctions Scandal* (London, 1979); T. H. Bingham and S. M. Gray, *Report on the Supply of Petroleum and Petroleum Products to Rhodesia* (London, 1978).

103. Fisher, *Macleod*, p. 198.

104. J. D. B. Miller, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs: Problems of Expansion and Attrition, 1953–1969* (London, 1974), chaps. 9, 10; Arnold Smith, *Stitches in Time* (London, 1981), chap. 4.

ertheless successively trimmed the small print so as to come within reach of meeting Smith's determination to have no black majority in Rhodesia in his lifetime. As early as November 1966 Labour ministers were calculating that over such a settlement Wilson "would have at most fifty abstentions [in his own party] and he would have the whole Tory party solidly behind him and the whole country as well."¹⁰⁵ Confident that he was not losing, Smith twice rejected Wilson's offer, on *Tiger* and on *Fearless*, and in March 1970 declared Rhodesia an independent republic. In the end, in November 1971 he made an agreement with Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Britain's foreign and Commonwealth secretary in the new Conservative government elected in 1970. Home believed that the terms which were then reached were so favourable to Rhodesia's blacks that "had we not agreed to a Commission to test opinion, I should have had no hesitation in asking them then and there for the support of the British Parliament."¹⁰⁶ But a test there had to be, and, as the Pearce Commission early in 1972 quickly found, Rhodesia's blacks would not succumb to the proffered terms. It was estimated that, with luck, these might have brought majority rule to Rhodesia in A.D. 2035.¹⁰⁷

"This time," Home wrote, "it was the Africans who turned down a settlement which could have averted war."¹⁰⁸ But that was to be myopic. The Smith-Home agreement principally signaled that there was no real alternative for Rhodesia's blacks to the use of force. Britain had reached the end of its line. Opinion polls now showed that while more than one-third of British opinion believed Smith could not be trusted, a decisive majority wanted Rhodesia's blacks to accept the Home-Smith terms.¹⁰⁹ When they did not, Britain bowed out, and even the Commonwealth concluded that a return to their earlier assault could make no difference. In Wilson's memoirs of his final term in office during 1974–1976, Rhodesia scarcely figures at all.¹¹⁰

It was guerrilla war, primarily in the Portuguese territories, that now turned the scales. Again the details cannot be fully specified here. With the Portuguese unmoved by the decolonizations of the British, the French, and

105. Crossman, *Diaries*, vol. 2, p. 139.

106. Lord Home, *The way the Wind Blows* (London, 1976), p. 257.

107. There is already a large literature on the Rhodesian story: e.g., Blake, *Rhodesia*; Robert C. Good, *UDI* (London, 1973); Elaine Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence* (London, 1978); Martin Meredith, *The Past Is Another Country: Rhodesia, 1890–1977* (London, 1979); Miles Hudson, *Triumph or Tragedy: Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (London, 1980); David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War* (London, 1981).

108. Home, *Way the Wind Blows*, pp. 257–58.

109. Polls reported, *Evening Standard* 10 December 1971, *Daily Telegraph* 13 December 1971; see Windrich, *Politics of Rhodesian Independence*, p. 176.

110. Harold Wilson, *Final Term: The Labour Government, 1974–1976* (London, 1979).

the Belgians, and largely impervious to the earlier Asian precedents as well, it was clear that force alone would shake them. Nationalist warfare against them was least successful in Angola, most successful in Guinea, and partially successful in Mozambique. But all told it cost Portugal 45 percent of its budget, the deployment of two hundred thousand Portuguese troops, and eight thousand dead. This was soon too much even for its military leadership in Africa. In April 1974 Portugal's Armed Forces Movement overthrew its long-entrenched dictatorship and decreed the ending of Portugal's empire. Guinea became independent in September 1974, Mozambique in June 1975, and Angola in November 1975.¹¹¹ Zimbabwean nationalists, much riven among themselves and checked by hope against hope that the British might pull off a miracle, only started mounting effective attacks on the Rhodesian regime after 1972. But following Mozambique's independence in 1975 their base areas could be doubled. The third group of skittles was beginning to tumble over.

Portugal's collapse evoked a striking realignment. Nationalist South Africa had so far seen its outward defenses lying in white-dominated Angola, Rhodesia, and Mozambique. The first and the third were now overrun, and the second was left dangerously exposed. An alternative possibility had meanwhile suddenly appeared. President Banda of Malawi had long since sought South African assistance, and not been denied it. In so many ways the former British Protectorates, Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland, now independent, were from the start South African satellites. Subsequently preparations were made to create in South Africa "independent" African homelands, Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), and so on. A "pax Pretoriana" comprising South Africa's assistance to new and insecure rulers against their rivals in return for an assurance that their countries would not be used for guerrilla bases against South Africa now emerged as a powerful option.

In 1974 Vorster, South Africa's prime minister, accordingly embarked upon his brief era of "detente." Its aim was to fill the post-Portuguese power vacuum in Central Africa with regimes that would be neither Communist nor Soviet allied. In the event it did not last, for in 1976 South African forces were attacking just such a regime in Angola. The intervening opportunity was, however, employed by President Kaunda of Zambia to induce Vorster to force Smith to settle with the Zimbabwean nationalists. As it happened, the South Africans had very little time for the Rhodesians. South Africa had always been careful to maintain its links with Britain and had invariably declined to recognise Smith's illegal regime. Vorster's entourage, moreover, took the view that

111. J. Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1969, 1978); B. Munslow, *Mozambique: The Revolution and Its Origins* (London, 1983); Patrick Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral* (Cambridge, England, 1983).

Rhodesia should have joined the Union by its referendum in 1923. The consequences of having stood out on its own could not now be balked. After 1974 South Africa's support for the Rhodesian regime could no longer be relied on.¹¹²

Back in July 1973 Smith had talked vaguely to Bishop Muzorewa, chairman of the African National Council formed at the time of the Pearce Commission in 1971. But under pressure from Vorster, who was now keenly anxious for a settlement to his north, in November 1974 Smith first allowed Nkomo to meet Kaunda, Nyerere, Machel (of Mozambique), and Khama (of Botswana)—the so-called front-line presidents—in Lusaka and then in December released the Zimbabwe nationalist leaders entirely. There followed, at Vorster's and Kaunda's joint instance, the extraordinary meeting in a railway carriage on the bridge at the Victoria Falls in August 1975 that Vorster, Kaunda, Smith, and the Zimbabwean nationalist leaders all attended. But it quickly aborted. The nationalists inevitably demanded majority rule. Rhodesia, however, had hitherto not only successfully defied sanctions; it had also so far not been much infiltrated by Zimbabwean armed forces. So Smith was not yet of a mind to settle on other peoples' terms. Late in 1975 and into 1976 he talked to Nkomo alone, but to no better result. The whole position was meanwhile impeded because the split among the Zimbabwean nationalists now released from detention (which in essence dated back to 1963) had become greatly aggravated. In 1975 the Rhodesian security forces murdered Herbert Chitepo, whom they believed to be the most threatening among them, and had the satisfaction of seeing this blamed on some of his rivals.¹¹³ One of the Zimbabwean parties, ZANU, was thereupon expelled from Zambia. In 1976 there was actually internecine fighting between them. All that in turn made it very difficult for Vorster to impose a settlement on Smith, since in front of his own electorate he could not be seen to be encouraging any repetition of the internecine conflicts in which he was fast becoming embroiled in Angola. When, however, in August 1976 Rhodesian forces made a damaging raid, against South African wishes, on a Zimbabwean base in Mozambique, Vorster to Smith's dismay did decide to withdraw the assistance that South Africa had been providing since 1967, and which had been of such importance to the Rhodesian regime.

For by that time (much to Vorster's initial gratification) a larger actor had entered the scene. In 1976 came the intervention in Central Africa of the American secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, troubled as America now was by Cuban troupes supporting the Marxist regime in Angola, by another Marxist

¹¹². Deon Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making* (Johannesburg, 1984), especially pp. 39–41.

¹¹³. Mr. K. Flower of the Rhodesian security services has made this clear to the author.

regime in Mozambique, and by potentially increased Russian influence over the whole area. After meetings with the British government, with Vorster, and with Nyerere and Kaunda and the front-line states, Kissinger flew to Pretoria in September 1976, where he forced Smith to make a public commitment to majority rule in Rhodesia. Though in the event this intervention was entirely fruitless (Smith simply did nothing about his undertaking), it nevertheless signaled that the tide was turning.¹¹⁴ Among other things the pressure of the newly fashioned Zimbabwean liberation armies on white Rhodesia was now mounting. Thanks to Smith's release of the principal leaders, their coming together in the new Popular Front late in 1976, the addition of friendly Mozambique bases from which to operate, and the adoption of Maoist policies of first winning over the rural population to their cause, they were now becoming a formidable adversary.¹¹⁵

The British, lately quite pitiful in their self-inflicted impotence but still feeling a residual responsibility, now awoke to the fact that the parties might not be quite so far apart as before, and—much prodded from all sides—ventured back to the fray.¹¹⁶ Labour's representative at the United Nations, Ivor Richard, thereupon presided over the lengthy Geneva Conference beginning in October 1976, which ground to a halt in December, and in September 1977 Labour's young foreign secretary, David Owen, brought in President Carter's envoy, the black Andrew Young, to produce the Anglo-American proposals, for a brief interim British colonial administration prior to the prompt establishment of black majority rule. Again the details reflected the larger fact that Ian Smith's world was remorselessly shrinking.

By 1978 Smith had come to believe this too. But he still wanted a settlement on his own terms, not those of the nationalists' armed forces. So in March 1978 he made his "internal settlement" with Bishop Muzorewa. Muzorewa's African National Council thereupon won the national elections in April 1979, and Muzorewa himself became prime minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.

The denouement began to shape up in May 1979 when the Conservatives in Britain were returned to office under Margaret Thatcher. Since a black majority had already voted in the 1979 elections within the terms of the internal settlement, she was minded to think they accepted it. In November 1978 the largest breach in her own party's ranks since the Second World War had occurred when the former (once liberally minded) colonial secretary Reginald Maudling had led more than 40 percent of its MPs to vote against the continu-

114. For this and the next four paragraphs see footnote 107 above.

115. T. Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla War in Zimbabwe* (London, 1985); David Lan, *Guns and Rain* (London, 1985).

116. Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries, 1974–76* (London, 1980), records some of the details in the Labour cabinet.

ance of sanctions, on an occasion when the leadership itself abstained;¹¹⁷ there was no possibility that the Conservatives would tolerate any further extension of Rhodesia's sanctions thereafter. Indeed, their election manifesto clearly implied that it would very soon recognise the Muzorewa-Smith regime.¹¹⁸ Mrs Thatcher was pushed away from this conclusion from three directions: by evidence that neither the Americans nor the French nor most other countries would recognise a Zimbabwean regime established on that basis; by the sudden threat to Britain's overseas interests in Nigeria's now intimidatory nationalisation of British oil installations; and by a well-nigh united Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka in August 1979 at which the Liberal (that is, conservative) Australian prime minister, Malcolm Fraser, played a principal role against her.¹¹⁹ The details of the internal settlement had clearly left white Rhodesians in many seats of power and in no way represented real majority rule. By now, moreover, the Zimbabwean liberation forces were destroying the underpinnings of the Smith-Muzorewa regime—at an all-told cost of around twenty thousand lives. White conscription had become extensive, and it was increasingly uncertain whether Smith could hold out much longer. Back in September 1978, after secretly but fruitlessly seeking a settlement with Nkomo, he had started to declare martial law (on one day, 31 May 1979, sixty-four violent incidents were recorded). During 1979 he extended it to 90 percent of the country.

Following the Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka, the climax was reached in yet one more of Britain's innumerable end-of-empire Lancaster House conferences. With several thousand liberation fighters now operating within Rhodesia, this occupied much of the rest of the year. The British chairman, the foreign and commonwealth secretary, Lord Carrington, had to cajole and bluster the delegates toward an agreement; but eventually—as by Macleod and others before him—the deed was spectacularly done. Carrington was crucially assisted by Kaunda and, above all, Machel, the hosts of the Zimbabwean base areas, who both badly wanted a settlement. It entailed the dispatch to Salisbury of a last British governor, Winston Churchill's son-in-law, Lord Soames. There were some anxious weeks while the liberation forces came in from the bush. But new elections were held in February 1980, and in March Mugabe, the principal leader of the Patriotic Front, was installed as prime minister of Zimbabwe; on 17 April 1980 the now well-honed flag-lowering-and-raising independence ceremony then took place.¹²⁰

With that the third sequential collapse of the colonial regimes in Africa

117. Norton, *Dissension in House of Commons*, pp. 455–56.

118. Hudson, *Triumph or Tragedy*, pp. 148–58.

119. Smith, *Stitches*, pp. 227–50.

120. Lapping, *End of Empire*, pp. 522–34.

ended. In striking contrast to the second, it had in every case required an anti-colonial war.

Two or three pertinent comments may be added. In these East and Central African colonies two British colonial policies that ultimately stemmed from the same source (from Durham in Canada in 1839) were bound to clash—the policy of giving self-government to British settler communities without much regard to their numbers and that of granting self-government to non-British peoples when their claims became irresistible. In Africa the second decisively prevailed over the first. In Rhodesia this was principally the work of the liberation forces that were eventually mustered against it. Britain in the end took some pride in the outcome. But it had only come about because, in addition to the dedication of guerrillas, Portugal had collapsed, South Africa had double-somersaulted, and the British had been saved, more than once, by the Commonwealth—more than once too by Ian Smith himself, and decisively in 1971 by Rhodesia's own blacks, from clinching a settlement that scarcely anyone else would have accepted. They gave no thanks to the Commonwealth or the others for their pains. The sheer protraction of the Rhodesian crisis, paralleled as it was by coups, killings, one-party regimes and economic collapse elsewhere in Africa, had by this time induced in Britain a great ennui with the Commonwealth and with Africa of an order Macmillan and Macleod, not to mention Creech Jones and Cohen, would never have dreamt. For them it had been “make or break.” It proved instead to be, or so many Britons came to feel, “hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.”

It has lately been suggested that international pressures and domestic constraints were at least as important as colonial pressures in propelling the West's former imperial powers to decolonize. This now seems scarcely tenable. For a start, the reality of international pressures can be seriously overdrawn. International moral support was no doubt valuable to nationalist leaders, but in practical terms it amounted to very little. Financial assistance to Tom Mboya in Kenya from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions was certainly helpful. Overseas scholarships for Kenyans and others¹²¹ and arms and military back-up elsewhere were no doubt valuable too. But of what good was even the redoubtable Henry Kissinger? At most, all of this support was very incidental. International pressures on colonial powers could be irritants. But the ease with which the Portuguese and Smith regimes brushed them aside for so long serves to underline their ineffectiveness. Such an argument fares no better when one asks whether international pressures (as distinct from other precedents) exercised significant influence earlier over

121. Goldsworthy, *Mboya*, passim.

the Belgians' decision to hasten from the Congo or eventually that of the French to concede independence to their African colonies. Harold Macmillan spoke eloquently of "the great issue in this second half of the twentieth century" being "whether the uncommitted peoples of Asia and Africa will swing to the East or the West."¹²² Yet it was not that which provoked Britain's suddenly accelerated decolonization after 1959. It was above all the fervour in the nationalisms they were still confronting. If this had not been displayed it is unimaginable that Britain's Conservative government after 1959 would have embarked on all that was entailed from their political and emotional point of view in dismantling the Central African Federation.

As for the importance of the opinions with influence within the imperial countries themselves, the moral of the tale told here has surely been that the positions adopted there, even when these openly contemplated decolonization (which was not often the case outside Britain), were invariably broken asunder by the force of nationalist developments within Africa itself. There are some suggestions that once Europe had made its postwar recovery, control of colonial resources could be dispensed with and the remaining colonies released. But the deliberate decision of the Labour government not to use force in the Anglo-Iranian oil crisis of 1951—in full accord with Ernest Bevin's well-honed policy of "nonintervention"¹²³ that, apart from the Suez aberration, was the evident precursor to subsequent Conservative policy right across Africa—clearly indicates that even where major economic interests were at stake the British would not use military power against nationalist forces, so long as these were neither Communist nor deliberately violent, in the way the French did in Indochina and Algeria, the Dutch in Indonesia, and the Portuguese in Africa. (It seems highly unlikely, for example, that after the war the British would have used force in Malaya—vital though its contributions were to Britain's lifeline, the sterling bloc—if the opposition had been nationalist and not Communist.)

Where imperialist stances did indubitably count was in fashioning the responses that each imperial power successively made toward the colonial pressures to which it was subjected. This has been the principal burden of this chapter. Here the British position was compounded of the contradiction between their deepseated desire to stay, for prestigious, economic, strategic, and, it must be allowed, certain altruistic purposes, and their long-standing commitment, to themselves and in their empire, to popular self-government. It was that contradiction which created the continuing tensions in their minds when they came to face nationalist forces. Ultimately, if painfully, these were always resolved in the latter direction. But to elevate such conclusions to a

122. Mansergh, *Documents and Speeches*, p. 348.

123. Louis, *Middle East*.

primary place in the great terminal decisions of empire is to give them precisely the place they did not have. For without nationalist pressure the contradictions would never have been confronted, let alone resolved. More generally, where under nationalist pressure imperialist reactions were or became accommodating, nonviolent transfers of power could mostly occur; where under nationalist pressure these became adamant, war—in Algeria, the Portuguese colonies, and Zimbabwe—invariably followed. Either way domestic imperial concerns were never primary determinants. Wherever one looks, nationalist upheavals against imperialist rule set the pace: in the Gold Coast indubitably, in French and Belgian Africa too, and palpably in Portuguese territory. Had they been less, or later, than they were in East and Central Africa, as the British fondly expected, perhaps the “partnership” regimes there might have been the better able to congeal. Since they were not, the British were caught out in a position they found both singularly embarrassing and exceedingly tiresome to handle. Much always turned on how well nationalist movements were welded together: Nkrumah, Nyerere, Banda, and Kaunda were so much more adept here than Awolowo, Nkumbula, Nkomo, and Sithole. All of which then raises the pervasive question of what the ingredients were that precipitated African nationalism and fashioned its varying expressions. A number of suggestions about this have been made above, but it is still a topic requiring much deeper investigation.

3. *Independence, French Style*

KEITH PANTER-BRICK

Decolonization is generally understood as the withdrawal of a state from its former colonies, leaving them independent. The French have nonetheless striven hard, harder than the British, to limit the discontinuities associated with independence. What mattered was not so much the formal transfer of power as the use to be made of it. However paradoxical it may seem, it was axiomatic and explicitly stated, not only in French official circles but also among francophone nationalists, that the counterpart to independence was interdependence and close cooperation, that decolonization should preserve rather than destroy *une présence française*. This phrase is a leitmotif throughout the whole process of French decolonization. The importance it was accorded affected the manner of decolonization, conditioned attitudes and served, to the French at least, as a touchstone of success and failure. If ever independence were to be conceded, French governments would be expected to secure binding commitments to a continuing interdependence. To permit independence without such safeguards was generally regarded as mismanagement and possibly as treason. In the more conservative political circles, the view persisted that independence was in fact an unnecessary and damaging concession. It was held that unless responsibility for all matters of common concern—of interdependence—lay with a single representative authority, answerable for the whole francophone community, francophone solidarity would be continually in jeopardy. The result of decolonization would indeed be withdrawal.¹

1. See D. B. Marshall, *The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic* (New Haven and London, 1973), for a thorough discussion of the views that became enshrined in the 1946 constitution; and Miles Kahler, *Decolonization in Britain and France*

Independence became nonetheless the crux of the matter—be it withdrawal or not. Nationalist leaders everywhere tended sooner or later to make independence a precondition of future cooperation. Just as the position of the Crown in the British Commonwealth had to be redefined to take account of the demand for unambiguous sovereignty, so also events made untenable any notion of francophone solidarity that implied the preservation of sovereign authority with responsibility for matters of common concern. Francophone solidarity had necessarily to be reconstituted on quite a different basis. Interdependence came to rest upon treaties of cooperation signed by independent sovereign states, subject therefore to the unqualified freedom of separate sovereignties.

This transition was not easily accomplished: much less so than in the case of the Commonwealth. There was strong resistance within France and especially on the part of French settlers who saw themselves as the epitome of the French presence overseas, to be preserved at all costs. Decolonization was marked by a series of political crises and ad hoc decisions.

There is a clear correspondence between the actual process of French decolonization and distinctions made in the 1946 French constitution concerning the overseas possessions. This constitutional differentiation was a recognition of fundamental historical and cultural differences. There were four distinct categories, each assigned a different constitutional status either within the French Republic itself or within the newly created French Union. They were *département d'outre-mer*, *territoire d'outre-mer*, *territoire associé*, *état associé*.

This combination of prescription and empiricism, when put to the test in ensuing years, encountered mixed fortunes. The *départements d'outre-mer*, often overlooked in histories of decolonization, still survive as such, independence having failed over the past forty years to muster any convincing electoral support. The *états associés* were more or less strangled at birth by nationalist movements. These nationalist movements predated 1945 and were reinforced by France's misfortunes during the war. They insisted on independence, defied repression, and eventually prevailed in the mid-1950s.

The *territoires d'outre-mer* and *territoires associés* underwent a relatively easy transition to independence. A series of reforms allowed them to move toward increased autonomy (that is, a more powerful local assembly) and at the same time to secure the benefits of greater integration (equal individual rights and increased representation in French parliamentary institutions). Some territories, such as Togo, Eastern Cameroon, and Guinea, set the pace:

(Princeton, 1984), for a careful and interesting analysis of the manner in which French political parties subsequently reacted to the issue of decolonization.

others had independence virtually thrust upon them. Algeria, *sui generis* and treated by the 1946 constitution in agnostic fashion, became consumed by internal war.²

The four major phases of French decolonization in Africa were:

- an initial period, 1946–1954, during which France sought to apply the 1946 constitutional settlement, encountering in the process considerable resistance in a number of countries, notably in North Africa and Madagascar;
- the period 1954–1956, which brought independence to Tunisia and Morocco;
- a period spanning the final two years of the Fourth Republic and the first two years of the Fifth Republic, during which the status quo was more or less maintained *de facto*, despite the change of regime; and
- the period 1960–1962, during which the balance of forces swung decisively in favor of independence for Madagascar, black Africa, and Algeria.

Thus only in the mid-1950s, and again after 1960, were decisions taken favoring independence. The more usual policy sought to limit overseas demands for autonomy to internal self-government. In this respect the Fifth Republic repeated the experience of the Fourth Republic. The same initial preference for a closely knit union foundered in the face of demands by overseas peoples for independence.

In consequence, it is difficult to single out any particular moment as a turning point or decisive stage in the course of French decolonization. Although Indochina, Morocco, and Tunisia attained independence in the 1954–1956 period, this was not regarded as a precedent for conceding it elsewhere, least of all in Algeria; and although black Africa and Algeria became independent in the 1960–1962 period, the 1958 constitution had not been designed as a blueprint for such an eventuality. During both the Fourth and Fifth republics, policy tended in fact to be elastic. The occasions when autonomy was stretched to mean independence were considered to be exceptions that never became the rule. The more restricted notion of autonomy, that of internal self-government, remained the preferred policy. But the area over which it continued in force was constantly shrinking.

This unintended and unacknowledged empiricism helps to explain the difficulties experienced by those French politicians who assumed responsibility for conceding independence in particular cases. Because their actions and decisions ran counter to ideological and emotional expectations, they did not go unchallenged. The very principle of independence had to be argued on each occasion. This made negotiations with independence movements es-

2. It was classified as a group of *départements* but treated differently both from the metropolitan *départements* and from the *départements d'outre-Mer*.

pecially difficult. Nationalist leaders were reluctant to enter into negotiations without securing from the French authorities a clear commitment to independence, in the foreseeable future if not immediately. Little or no progress could be made in resolving the conflicts in Indochina and the Maghreb until this question of principle had been settled. A settlement depended on those prepared to make this kind of commitment coming to power; the Mendès-France government (Vietnam and Tunisia, 1954), the Edgar Faure government (Morocco, 1955), and de Gaulle (Algeria, 1961–1962). Such governments were accused by the ultras of the colonial lobby of having acted imprudently, even cowardly, of having played into the hands of those least prepared to provide proper guarantees for the protection of French interests. There was a feeling that not only France had been betrayed but also all those overseas people who had favored a close association with France. The Mendès-France, Edgar Faure, and de Gaulle governments were nonetheless supported, although without enthusiasm, by sufficient French opinion, notably moderate right-wing opinion, to enable negotiations to get underway and a settlement to be reached.

It is in this sense that one must consider French decolonization to have gone through a succession of turning points, concentrated, however, in the two periods 1954–1956 and 1960–1962. The initial postwar conviction, widely shared, that independence posed an inadmissible threat to a fundamental national interest—France's own standing as a world power—was thus shaken loose, and then reasserted so as to sustain and justify a continuing struggle to retain control, as in Algeria after 1956. French policy underwent twists and turns, as seen in the way ideological and constitutional prescriptions, first imposed during 1945–1946, were relaxed under overseas pressure during 1954–1956, reimposed during 1956–1960, and finally abandoned again under pressure during 1960–1962.

French decolonization was the combined handiwork of overseas political forces determined to secure independence and those French politicians who were prepared to brave domestic ideology and vested interests because they had taken the measure of nationalist forces in two respects: the strength of their commitment to the principle of independence and their readiness to acknowledge the desirability or necessity of interdependence.

The interrelationship between the strength of an independence movement and agreement on post-independence linkages is a subtle one. Whether or not the eventual independence settlement incorporated arrangement for close cooperation thereafter depended very largely on the degree of trust or mistrust that prevailed, which in turn depended very much on circumstances or even personalities. Miscalculation, as in Vietnam, produced intransigence and ended in withdrawal, but it was avoided elsewhere. In the cases of

Morocco and Tunisia, French agreement to independence was reciprocated by firm commitments to interdependence. In the case of Algeria, continuities were agreed to by the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) but rejected by the French settlers when they abandoned Algeria en masse. Thus, an independence movement could be strong yet also choose to go along with a policy of interdependence. This was a concession partly to French insistence, partly to internal reservations about too radical a break. Some linkages were necessarily broken—for example, those of sovereignty; others remained or were juridically reconstituted.

French decolonization, therefore, was distinctive not so much by a blanket refusal to contemplate independence—said to have proved disastrous except in encounters with pliant or collaborative nationalism, as in black Africa—but by a persistent emphasis on the desirability of interdependence. This certainly found its most receptive and consistent response in black Africa, where independence and continuing close cooperation was almost an act of collusion with elites in many cases ill prepared for independence. But a similar reciprocity between independence and interdependence was acknowledged by the Tunisian and Moroccan independence movements during 1954–1956, and by Algerian leaders in 1962. To the credit of those in power in France at the time, a readiness to concede in advance the principle of independence opened the way to settlements that recognized continuing French interests. Continuity, not withdrawal, is the keynote of French decolonization. French policy, far from being repeatedly self-defeating, was most often suprisingly successful, from this point of view.³ While certainly not immune from external pressures, French decolonization had its own internally generated momentum, its direction and pace produced by an interaction of French objectives and overseas aspiration, in which some good timing, some miscalculation, and some unimaginative but also some remarkable leadership all had a part to play.

The achievements of the 1954–1956 period, when Tunisia and Morocco became independent, have since been overshadowed by those of 1960–1962, when so many of the francophone black African states and finally Algeria achieved independence. No doubt this is a consequence of the way the two periods have entered into current mythology. The grand manner in which decolonization took place during the later period not only fascinates and arouses admiration. It also closed a chapter in French history, a difficult period out of which France reemerged under de Gaulle's inspiration as one of

3. For a contrary view, namely, that France was in the grip of a "stubborn colonial consensus" that exacerbated conflict and damaged French interests, see Tony Smith, "French and British Decolonization," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization 1940–1960* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 87–115.

the leading world powers. In contrast, the years 1954–1956 appear to belong to a quite different period, one of self-doubt, indecision, and decline, when governments lacked the capacity to manage the difficult but necessary task of decolonization.

This is a distortion of the historical record. Decolonization, in a manner analogous to British practice, was already under way in the mid-1950s. Successful decolonization did not have to await de Gaulle's return to power in 1958 or the demonstration of Anglo-French vulnerability at Suez. It is true that the advent of Moroccan and Tunisian independence came to be overshadowed by subsequent events at Suez and in Algeria. But at the time, it constituted a classic example of negotiated decolonization, achieved by moderates on both sides in the face of more extreme elements. We need, in the interests of a more balanced historical perspective, to reconsider the events of that earlier period and accordingly they will be given the greatest attention in what follows.

THE FOURTH REPUBLIC: TUNISIA AND MOROCCO

Tunisia and Morocco appeared to be very far from a settlement in the early 1950s. Not only independence but even internal self-government was a bone of contention because of settler demand for representation. Tunisia and Morocco were protectorates. Their traditional rulers, the bey of Tunis and the sultan of Morocco, had by treaty with France surrendered external but not internal sovereignty. In practice, not only external affairs and defense had become French responsibilities; many domestic matters had also fallen, directly or indirectly, under French control. There had resulted a system of internal administration, out of tune with the times and much in need of reform, but difficult to change because of conflicting settler and nationalist demands. The number of French settlers had increased steadily over the years.⁴ They considered that their contribution to the country's development and modernization, especially its economy and finances, entitled them to a share of power. But such demands, amounting to so-called co-sovereignty, were quite unacceptable to nationalist opinion. Since no reforms were possible without the formal consent of the traditional rulers, and neither side would give way, the result was a stalemate lasting until 1954.

Until then settler views had prevailed, as may be illustrated by the turn of

4. Not all settlers were French by origin. For instance, in Tunisia, Italians and Maltese outnumbered French until 1931. Thereafter, through naturalization and further immigration, French nationals came to predominate, numbering 160,000 out of a total of approximately 250,000. Of these, more than half had been born in Tunisia, and the principal source of income for about one-third of the families was a public salary or pension.

events during 1950–1951. The U.N. vote on 21 December 1949 in favor of Libyan independence had aroused the hopes of Tunisian nationalists and induced the French government to take action. Bourguiba, the leader of the Néo-Destour, visited Paris and issued a relatively moderate set of demands. The French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, appointed a new resident-general, Louis Périllier, to lead Tunisia to independence, but it was to be “as for every other territory, independence within the French Union.”⁵ Thereby authorized to introduce internal self-government, albeit by stages, Périllier nonetheless met with insurmountable opposition. His hands were tied, as were those of his minister, for the French settlers in Tunisia were able to count on the wholehearted support in the National Assembly of the deputies from Algeria and of many others who were determined to see that nothing was done in Tunisia that could weaken France’s position in the Maghreb as a whole, and especially in Algeria.

The resident-general in Morocco—none other than Maréchal Juin—and the governor-general in Algeria added their own strong reservations, and there was resistance from some high-ranking officials of the North African section of the ministry.⁶ All that Périllier could achieve, after four months of negotiations, as much with Paris as with the bey’s ministers, was a modest package of reforms that came into effect in February 1951.⁷

Any chance of further progress foundered on the results of the June 1951 French elections. These strengthened the right-wing parties in the National Assembly. René Pleven, as prime minister in the second half of 1950, had given some encouragement to Périllier in his effort at reform. But in the autumn of 1951, when again prime minister, he thought that nothing further should be attempted. Robert Schuman however, was still foreign minister; he was persuaded by Périllier to allow a delegation of Tunisian ministers to visit Paris in the hope that this would restore the momentum, and Périllier, “with an energy close to despair, and an audacity close to imprudence,” identified himself with the delegation’s demand that internal self-government be realized “with a minimum of delay.”⁸ The settlers, contending that the Néo-

5. According to Périllier, this qualification was added to the official text of the minister’s speech at the prime minister’s insistence. See Louis Périllier, *La conquête de l’indépendance tunisienne* (Paris, 1949), pp. 91–92.

6. See *ibid.*, pp. 91–92, 99–100. The head of the the North Africa desk was, at the time, François Puraux. His father had seen long service in North Africa and the Middle East and was later elected to the Senate as a representative of the French in Tunisia.

7. The Tunisian prime minister replaced the resident-general as chairman of the Council of Ministers. The Tunisian ministers were given greater freedom of action. The number of Tunisians in the civil service was to be increased to half the posts in senior grades, two-thirds in middle grades, and three-quarters in lower grades. *Ibid.*, pp. 85–90.

8. The comment is Edgar Faure’s. See his *Mémoires*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1984), p. 358.

Destour's only strength lay in the complacency and weakness of the resident-general, denounced Périllier and Schuman and even blamed the prime minister, René Pleven, and the president, Vincent Auriol.

The government's eventual response gave the settler lobby satisfaction. A letter addressed to the bey took an uncompromising stand on the issue at the very heart of the dispute: the French settlers' right to political participation. This was justified by references to France's contribution to the country's economic development, its civilizing mission, and the need for a permanent link between the two countries.⁹ Périllier had no option but to resign.

It was a rebuff not only for Périllier but also for Robert Schuman who had signed the letter. Subsequently he claimed impotence; the strings of policy, he confessed, were pulled not by Paris but by Tunis and Rabat.¹⁰ This was undoubtedly true, but only in so far as those in Paris permitted it. Schuman accepted failure in Tunisia because he gave priority to his policy in Europe. In a deal proposed by ministerial colleagues, several of whom represented Algerian constituencies, he was given a free hand to carry out his European policy—provided he no longer concerned himself with North Africa.¹¹

French policy continued to vacillate, until Mendès-France took office in February 1954 and decided to break the deadlock in a more authoritative and dramatic fashion. The time was ripe, the method effective, and the results encouraging to those who had all along been of the opinion that Bourguiba was not only representative of Tunisian opinion but also willing to recognize French interests and the necessity for a continuing French presence, and thus a reliable person with whom to negotiate.

Mendès-France's method appeared, to his critics, to put the cart before the horse. Instead of seeking Tunisian guarantees in exchange for French concessions, he declared immediate agreement to internal self-government, details being left for subsequent negotiation. It was a calculated bid to avoid another Vietnam. A guerilla movement had been gathering strength following the repressive measures taken by Périllier's successor, General de Hautecloque, and the bey found it increasingly difficult to persuade anyone to assume the responsibilities of ministerial office.¹²

Mendès-France took a gamble on Bourguiba being still able and willing to

9. For the text of the letter dated 15 December 1951, see Périllier, *La conquête*, pp. 124–26.

10. In an article published in *La nef* (Paris, March 1953).

11. See Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 1, p. 359, and A. Grosser, *Les affaires extérieures de la France* (Paris, 1984), p. 90.

12. General de Hautecloque had arrived in Tunis on a gunboat. In response to Tunisian attempts to take their case to the United Nations, he had arrested several Néo-Destour leaders, including Bourguiba, and some ministers, including Chenik, the prime minister. There followed a combination of the carrot and the stick, all to no avail. These attempts to repress the Néo-Destour had merely left the bey in limbo and endangered the lives of the European community.

confine immediate demands to internal self-government. He relied upon a theatrical gesture—appearing unannounced in Tunisia to inform the bey of the government's decision. He gave the European community and the hesitants within his own government little or no time to protest—the Cabinet meeting to which he outlined his decision was held only a few hours before his departure for Carthage—and they had to be content with assurances that the subsequent negotiations would be conducted very firmly. They were to some extent reassured by the appointment of the military commander in Tunisia, General Boyer de Latour, as resident-general, by Maréchal Juin's willingness to accompany Mendès-France to Tunisia and by the dispatch to Tunisia of troops no longer required in Vietnam.

The detailed negotiations dragged on for nearly another year, well into 1955—further evidence, not so much of any great differences between French and Tunisian moderates, but of difficulties caused by the extremists of both sides. Essential to the moderates' cause was an agreement that the fellaghas should lay down their arms. In an operation analagous to and as remarkable as that which was to take place much later in Rhodesia, assembly points were designated where, in the presence of a French officer and a Tunisian government representative, the fellaghas handed in their arms and left as free men.¹³ A political settlement had preempted an armed struggle, to the relief of moderate leadership on both sides.

There was perhaps little doubt in most minds that Tunisia's internal self-government was but a step toward eventual independence, but independence was not thought to be imminent. Moreover, the arrangements for preserving close links after independence had still to be worked out, the one being considered a corollary of the other. Out of the ruins of the French Union had still to emerge something that, because it was still inchoate, was vaguely referred to as *l'ensemble français*.

Bourguiba acknowledged as much when he said in May 1955, just before the signing of the Franco-Tunisian agreements, "We know quite well that independence which remains our supreme objective . . . has to be reconciled with the interdependence of countries linked by permanent and higher interests."¹⁴ It seemed that a stage had been reached in the process of French decolonization when the issue of independence could definitely be raised, providing it was coupled with continuing solidarity. Indeed, a rule of thumb appeared to be emerging, that the closer the acknowledged interdependence the nearer one might be to independence. How near was, of course, a matter that had still to be put to the test, and it remained to be seen precisely when

13. 2,719 rebels complied, handing in more than 2,100 weapons and up to 100,000 cartridges. Périllier, *La conquête*, p. 231–34.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 279.

and where the first crucial test would occur. It was something of a surprise that it came so soon, within the year 1955, and not in Tunisia but in Morocco, where the reaction to nationalist demands was much more firmly entrenched and where the question of reform was even more at a standstill.

Mendès-France had been replaced as prime minister by Edgar Faure in February 1955, and, after the agreements with Tunisia had been finalized and approved by Parliament in the following May, Faure turned his attention to securing a similar settlement in Morocco. Barely four months later, matters had been taken very much further: it had been agreed that Morocco was to be an "independent state united to France by permanent ties of freely accepted and clearly defined interdependence."¹⁵ For Edgar Faure the settlement proved to be "the most difficult, the most distressing, and without doubt the most important ordeal" of his political career.¹⁶ Some of his colleagues on the other hand thought they had been living in a fool's paradise. They accused the prime minister of having acted with undue haste, of having strengthened the position of the extreme nationalist forces at the very moment when they should have been held in check. He had allowed himself to be outmaneuvered as decisively as the French army in Vietnam. France had suffered a diplomatic Dien Bien Phu, and those Moroccans who had been prepared to stand by France had been cruelly betrayed.¹⁷

This rapid and quite unexpected agreement with the Moroccan nationalists has, however, to be seen as the almost unavoidable denouement of a situation created in 1953 through the deposition of the sultan, Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef, by the ultraconservatives of the settler community and its allies within the Moroccan administration, working in close collaboration with cer-

15. Most of those principally involved on the French side have provided their own account of events. The most recent and notable of these are Faure's *Mémoires*. His literary gift and sardonic style of writing make them a delight to read. They provide a detailed historical record and self-justification. Raymond Triboulet, a dissenting member of Edgar Faure's government who was among those dismissed at the height of the crisis, has published his version in *Un Gaullist de la IV^e République* (Paris, 1985). Earlier publications include those of Pierre July, the minister directly responsible for Tunisia and Morocco (*Une république pour un roi*, Paris, 1979); Gilbert Grandval, who was appointed resident-general in Morocco in June 1955 (*Ma mission au Maroc*, Paris, 1956); and General Boyer de la Tour, who took over from Grandval at the end of August 1955 (*Verités sur l'Afrique du Nord*, Paris, 1956). All three are full of mutual recrimination. Much the best analysis in English is Stéphane Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict, 1943-1956* (New Haven and London, 1968).

16. Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, p. 241.

17. "L'été des dupes" is the title of the chapter in which Raymond Triboulet provides his account of events in those summer and autumn months. *Un Gaullist*, chap. 8. The bitterness with which he writes, thirty years after the event, is an indication of how controversial an issue the decolonization of Morocco had become.

tain traditional rulers, notably al-Glawi, the Pasha of Marrakesh.¹⁸ The sultan's offense in the eyes of the resident Europeans and of al-Glawi, was to have become too closely identified with the major independence movement, the Istiqlal. But the deposed sultan refused to renounce his right to the throne. He remained, for many Moroccans and also the Spanish authorities, the legitimate sultan, and the refusal of even the most moderate nationalists to enter a government constituted by his successor, Moulay Mohammed ben Arafa, eliminated any chance of initiating reforms.

So long as this question of the throne had not been resolved, no Moroccan government could be appointed with whom it would be worth negotiating the tricky question of internal self-government. Although only a preliminary issue, it was thought vital, for so much appeared to depend on how it was resolved. Arafa had to be removed, but not in a way that left open the door to ben Youssef's return to the throne, which would be for the French a humiliation and for the nationalists a triumph. The appointment of a third person, either as a new sultan or as keeper of the royal seal, or the appointment of a Regency Council, were the alternative solutions proposed. A new sultan would exclude most surely the possibility of ben Youssef's restoration, but he would enjoy no more legitimacy than Arafa, and so it was really no solution to the problem. If moderate nationalist opinion was to be won over, the only hope lay in a Regency Council on which the contending factions could be represented. By offering everyone some hope, it might allow the matter of reform to proceed.

Everything depended of course on its composition. The struggle between Moroccan nationalists and French ultraconservatives became focused on this question. Edgar Faure's own initial standpoint on this question was carefully and prudently concealed. He quite rightly estimated that the Moroccan crisis was unlikely to be settled without the exiled sultan's cooperation and was of the opinion that France's best hope of arriving at a satisfactory settlement lay in fact in bringing him back to the throne.¹⁹ The prime minister evidently

18. By a "coup" organized from Rabat without prior government approval but not subsequently denounced by the government. It caused the resignation of one minister, François Mitterand, and the recorded dissent of another, Edgar Faure. For details, see Bernard, *Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp. 238–50.

19. "If France herself brought back the King she would not lose face. The King, for his part, would expunge the offense, in conformity with the mystical aspect of a solemn reconciliation. Because of his strong personality, his experience, the support of his son Hassan, whose exceptional capabilities I had already come to appreciate, and finally precisely because of the enhanced prestige which his ordeal had won for him in nationalist circles, King Mohammed was France's best card." Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, pp. 249–50. This statement leaves one wondering whether Edgar Faure was also prepared to accept the sultan's terms. These included the integrity of

hoped to obtain the ex-sultan's approval without making any positive commitment on the question of his return: that would be for the Moroccans themselves to decide at some future date once the substantive question of internal reforms had been resolved.²⁰ What the prime minister set out to achieve was Arafa's replacement by a three-man Regency Council representative of both traditionalists and nationalists, the appointment of a broadly representative Moroccan government, and a negotiated agreement on some form of internal self-government—all with the approval of both the French Parliament and the Sultan in exile.

This was not what transpired. Procedures were reversed. The substantive issues of reform were discussed and decided before the preliminary issue of the throne had been settled. Moreover, it was not internal self-government but independence and interdependence that formed the basis of the agreement. When finally the Regency Council was appointed, it met merely in order to make way for Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef's return. Both the French prime minister and the Moroccan sultan could claim victory: the only ones who considered themselves the losers were the diehards among the settlers and their last-ditch supporters within the French political system.

The explanation for this unexpected chain of events is complex. It is partly a consequence of the nationalist strength; they posed a military threat to France's position in Morocco and Algeria and they needed to be placated. It was also a consequence of Edgar Faure's determination to reach some sort of settlement before it was too late. Faced by equally determined opposition, in Morocco itself and in Paris, indeed within his own government, Edgar Faure abandoned the planned procedures. Although he thereby opened the door to independence and ben Youssef's return to the throne, the consolation was an agreement on interdependence.

There was nothing predetermined about the outcome. The agreement emerged in the making of it—rather like that on India's independence and membership of the Commonwealth.

The prime minister, knowing the delicacy of the task facing him, proceeded with the utmost circumspection, Gilbert Grandval, the new resident-general appointed in mid-June 1955, was allowed to make his own assessment of the situation and to make his own proposals. Parliament was allowed to disperse

Moroccan sovereignty and an acknowledgement of interdependence, terms which had been made known to the French authorities in December 1954. See Bernard, *Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp. 234, 250.

20. The minister specifically responsible for Tunisia and Morocco, Pierre July, however, under intense questioning did assure the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, on 30 July 1955, that there would be no restoration. Moreover, the instructions issued to Gilbert Grandval, on his appointment as resident-general, excluded it as a working hypothesis.

for the summer recess, assured that it would not be presented with another *fait accompli* such as had occurred in 1951 when the sultan was deposed. The prime minister's ministerial colleagues were allowed to reserve judgment of his initiative.

As expected, Grandval advocated a three-man Council of the Throne, but everything depended of course on Arafa's willingness to withdraw. No French government could take the political risk of forcing off the throne the man who ostensibly had been placed there to safeguard French interests. Arafa's refusal to vacate the throne was to prove the trump card that the prime minister's opponents used repeatedly over the summer and autumn months. This group was so well placed, in Rabat and in Paris, that it was constantly and immediately informed of the government's every move. Whenever Arafa professed privately to the French government his willingness to withdraw, pressure was immediately brought to bear to secure from him an open declaration of his intention to remain on the throne. This blocked all concessions to the nationalist cause and promised to wear the government down to the point of resignation.

The only way the prime minister could recover the momentum was to change tack. Instead of Arafa being asked to withdraw, he was to be invited to form a government so that negotiations could begin. It was generally recognized, however, that none but a limited number of so-called traditionalists would be prepared to serve at Arafa's invitation, so he was in effect being asked to demonstrate, through his failure to form a broadly representative government, the necessity of his departure. The prime minister's colleagues could scarcely object to this stratagem, since they were all agreed that negotiations were both necessary and urgent. Having thereby conceded the probability of Arafa's withdrawal, they were then invited by the prime minister to consider the three alternatives. In order of preference these were, first, Arafa's replacement; second, the delegation of the royal seal; and, third, a Regency Council. But since a Regency Council was known to be the only procedure acceptable to nationalist opinion, it was in effect given tacit approval. The prime minister then secured consent for negotiations to begin within a month's time. These would be either with Arafa's government or, in default, with representatives of all sections of Moroccan opinion, including the two nationalist parties, the Istiqlal and the Parti Démocratique de l'Indépendance. On this second point some of the prime minister's colleagues expressed reservations, and a line was drawn by stipulating that none of those deemed hostile to France was to be invited.²¹ The prime minister thus re-

21. This revised plan of action was discussed first by the Comité de Coordination pour l'Afrique du Nord, an interministerial committee from which Maréchal Juin had already resigned on 2 July 1955 in protest at the way the government was handling the situation in Morocco. Its meeting was

gained the initiative and moved a considerable way forward, especially in the agreement to a round-table conference. As it transpired, Arafa was unable to form a representative government, and the conference was convened for late August in Aix-les-Bains.

Edgar Faure has given a picturesque account of its proceedings. The traditionalist supporters of French rule, Pashas and Caid, used the little French they possessed to profess their attachment to France, its culture, and its civilizing mission, but they cut a poor figure compared to the nationalist leaders, who urged their case with such lucidity and mastery of the French language that Edgar Faure burst out, "*La culture française, c'est vous.*"²²

The conference proved decisive in two respects. First, agreement was reached with the nationalist leaders and the grand vizier on a number of matters both procedural and substantive. Second, the government itself became more united in support of the prime minister's initiative, for Pinay, the foreign minister and leader of the Independents (a parliamentary group vital to the prime minister's survival), had come round to the view that a settlement necessarily involved the nationalists. The support of General Koenig, minister of war and a Gaullist, was more hesitant, but less vital.²³

What had been agreed at Aix needed to be confirmed with Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef. Two French envoys, General Catroux and Henri Yrissou, left secretly on 5 September for Antsirabe in Madagascar, his place of exile.²⁴ When the news leaked out, the nationalists insisted on being represented; they were taking no chances. An exchange of letters between the two French envoys and the sultan in exile allowed each side to set out its own position on the central issues of sovereignty and interdependence. With somewhat differ-

spread over two days, 11–12 August, and on the second day the prime minister met with the leaders of the parliamentary groups that constituted his parliamentary majority. The full cabinet, meeting on 12 August, confirmed the decisions taken. Edgar Faure had described how he took his ministers step by step from the initial premise that reforms were necessary and urgent to the final conclusion that nationalist leaders should be invited to the conference. Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, pp. 400–04.

22. Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, pp. 436–38.

23. Edgar Faure likened Pinay and Koenig to the buckets of a well that, fixed to a single rope, move up and down in opposite directions. As soon as Pinay moved toward agreement, Koenig, hearing of it, backed away, and vice versa. Both ministers risked being disowned by their respective parties (*ibid.*, pp. 433–34). On 23 August five of the right-wing political groups had issued a joint declaration in favor of withdrawing support from the government if concessions were made to "those directly or indirectly responsible for the massacres designed to evict France from Morocco" (Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p. 290).

24. The choice of envoys is a further indication of the prime minister's concern to minimize opposition within his cabinet and parliamentary majority. General Catroux was senior in the army's hierarchy to General Koenig, and *Grand Chancelier de la Légion d'Honneur*. Yrissou was Pinay's *directeur du cabinet* in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

ent phrasing—which may be interpreted as implying a difference of substance—it was recorded that Morocco was to be “modern, free and sovereign” and that the two countries were to be joined by “permanent ties of interdependence freely consented.” The position of the French residents was to be “guaranteed,” but there was little echo in the sultan’s letter of General Catroux’s fulsome references to “the intangibility of the French presence in Morocco” and of its “everlasting rights and prerogatives,” which could not “be put into question, the two countries being indissociable.” There was agreement on the appointment, on a temporary basis, of a Regency Council—the sultan reserving his rights to the throne—and the formation of a representative Moroccan government. This was to negotiate, according to the sultan’s letter, *new* agreements—an intimation perhaps of disagreement on the question whether or not the Treaty of Fez, which established the protectorate in 1912, was to remain in force.²⁵

This exchange of letters in early September 1955 emphasized a substantial measure of agreement, while niceties of diplomatic language cloaked the difficult issues still to be negotiated. The government was now able to announce confidently that it had a plan, a method, and a timetable.

Further progress, however, depended entirely on its being able to implement its own side of the bargain: to bring about Arafat’s departure and to install a Council of the Throne. By now the opposition within France itself had been fully aroused, reinforced by the resignation of the resident-general, Grandval, on 22 August and the disclosure that in his opinion the prime minister was seriously at fault in his handling of the situation.²⁶ The Aix-les-Bains agreements—and the undertaking that once a negotiating government had been appointed the exiled sultan would be allowed to take up residence in France (but not take part in political activities)—had transposed the main line of cleavage in the Moroccan dispute from one between Moroccan nationalists and France to one between a French government determined to decolonize with nationalist agreement and an internal opposition convinced for various reasons that this would be detrimental to French interests.

The opposition’s main strength lay in its delaying tactics, a familiar and often highly effective practice under the Fourth Republic. The government was working against several time constraints. Parliament was due to reconvene at the beginning of October, and the government would then discover whether or not it still had a majority. The U.N. General Assembly was also due to meet at the end of September. Morocco was already on the assembly’s

25. For the text of the letters, see *Année politique* (1955): 670–71.

26. Grandval concluded that the prime minister must have been misleading him from the very beginning. For details, see Grandval, *Ma mission*. Also Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, especially pp. 390–95.

agenda, and it was probable that Algeria would be added. The government could survive condemnation at the U.N., but it would be an unwelcome embarrassment. A third constraint was the threat of an all-out armed insurrection. This was the least predictable but a constant worry. There were inevitably divisions within military and political circles about France's ability to deal with a general uprising and the calculation of the costs involved, but there was little doubt, in the prime minister's own mind, that an armed conflict would be disastrous for France. He states in his *Mémoires* that he would have been prepared to sacrifice fifty thousand lives to secure France's position in Morocco, though he was of the opinion that any attempt to defeat Moroccan nationalism by force of arms would not only have cost much more but would ultimately have failed.²⁷ The disturbances of 20 August 1955, the second anniversary of ben Youssef's deposition, had already shown that the Berber areas were just as much in a state of dissidence as the towns. Still more alarming was the simultaneous flare-up in Algeria that cost the French army 120 dead and 123 wounded. This was clear evidence that Moroccan and Algerian guerrilla movements were acting in collusion.

It was plain that any failure on the government's part to secure Arafa's withdrawal, and any delay that could be construed as either a lack of French will or lack of authority to implement the agreements, would inevitably play into the hands of those nationalist leaders who preferred arms to diplomacy. The prime minister had no alternative but to make haste. He had been informed that 1 October 1955 had been fixed as the ultimate date for Arafa's withdrawal, failing which a coordinated Algerian-Moroccan uprising would commence.²⁸

The stakes were high, the prime minister resolute, but the resistance still strong. The new resident-general, Boyer de Latour, transferred from Tunis, was very soon at loggerheads with his minister, Pierre July, and he received every encouragement from the dissenters within Edgar Faure's own government and from the leaders of the European residents in Morocco.²⁹ He fully exploited his official instructions which enjoined that Arafa's departure be voluntary, that the Council of the Throne include a supporter of al-Glawi, and that the majority of those appointed as Ministers were to be friendly toward France. He protested strongly at a concession made to the exiled sultan at Antsirabe that no friend of al-Glawi would be appointed. When de Latour was summoned to Paris to discuss the matter with his minister and some of the

27. Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, p. 244.

28. *Id.*, p. 464.

29. See Pierre Boyer de Latour, *Vérités* (Paris, 1956), for a revealing account (pp. 124–92) of how the new resident-general perceived the situation and justified his actions. See also Pierre July, *Une république*, chap. 8.

nationalist leaders on 17 September, he insisted on being allowed to use his own discretion, limited though this now was by fresh instructions dated 20 September.

If he had had his way he would have thrown everything once more into the melting pot by abandoning all ideas of a Council of the Throne and by appointing instead a third person to the throne. He favored the appointment of a caliph from Spanish Morocco. This would have pleased the Spanish government and thereby have improved the military situation, for it was expected that in return the Spanish authorities would cease their toleration of guerrilla sanctuaries on their side of the border in the Rif Mountains. The government was scarcely in a position to dismiss Boyer de Latour, given the deadlines by which it was constrained. In desperation, two senior officials in the Residency, having told Boyer de Latour how completely they disagreed with him, attempted secretly to communicate with Arafa and to secure his written consent to a voluntary withdrawal.³⁰ In New York, on 30 September, Pinay, determined not to address the U.N. General Assembly empty handed, decided to jump the gun. He gave solemn assurances that Morocco would be "a modern democratic and sovereign state" united with France by ties of freely accepted interdependence.

That same day the prime minister, to make certain of Arafa's departure, agreed to the resident-general's request that Arafa should delegate the royal seal to one of his cousins. The prime minister took a risk. The resident-general believed that he had thereby obviated the appointment of a Council of the Throne. He began to reassure settler spokesmen that they could now count on proper safeguards. But the prime minister had little difficulty in securing agreement from Arafa, once safely in Tangiers, that a Council of the Throne was perfectly in order.

October 1, 1955, did not, however, pass without violence. There was some loss of life, though no general uprising. The towns, under firm nationalist control, remained relatively quiet. Parliament reconvened on 4 October and immediately focused its attention on events in Morocco. In securing a resounding vote of confidence, the prime minister succeeded where many had thought, and hoped, he would fail. The government's comfortable majority—462 to 136—was due primarily to the decisive leadership of both the prime minister and Pinay and secondly to concern over Algeria.

Pinay had been won over to the policy of reaching an agreement with the

30. They both succeeded and failed. The clandestine manner in which the crucial "transfer of power" was secured, and then negated, through discovery and double-dealing, must rank as one of the most bizarre episodes in the history of decolonization. The resident-general's own role has been variously interpreted. See July, *Une république*, pp. 241–54; Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, pp. 489–97; and Bernard, *Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp. 312–16.

nationalist leaders and the exiled sultan at the Aix-les-Bains conference. Faure's references in his *Mémoires* to a "Faure-Pinay government" is an indication of how crucial was Pinay's support. It allowed the prime minister to isolate the diehards in his own government and to force them out before they themselves resigned at an inauspicious moment, such as in the middle of the crucial parliamentary debate. They were caught off guard, and General Koenig even found himself replaced as minister of war by General Billotte, a member of his own parliamentary group. By the time Parliament met, Edgar Faure had virtually assured himself of a majority. By opening the debate, contrary to the usual procedure, he made sure that his own side of the case would be heard first. He set out with great conviction and persuasion the arguments for achieving a negotiated settlement with ben Youssef and the nationalists.

Uppermost perhaps in most French minds was not so much Morocco as Algeria. The struggle in Algeria—where France claimed much stronger rights—would only be prejudiced if it became part of a wider Algerian-Moroccan struggle. France could hardly manage an armed conflict in both countries simultaneously. France's grip on Morocco itself was more tenuous than ever. There were signs of disaffection among Moroccans serving with the French army, and some French reservists had already been recalled for dispatch to Morocco.³¹ An agreement with the more moderate nationalists in Morocco would at least spike the guns of Allal-el-Fassi, one of the most militant Istiqlal leaders operating from Cairo who, on 4 October, had announced that the Algerian and Moroccan liberation armies had been put under joint command. It is true that some thought, like Bidault, that if France relaxed its grip on Tunisia and Morocco, French Algeria would be doomed like a bird without its wings, but the more general sentiment favored the argument that France's best interest lay in concentrating French military commitment to that area of the Maghreb where French interests and French legitimacy were considered to be the most firmly implanted, and in neutralizing if possible both Morocco and Tunisia by timely concessions.

The exact nature of these concessions was still obscured by continual references to "interdependence." Edgar Faure, addressing the National Assembly earlier in June 1955, had stressed "genuine interdependence." Pinay used the term at the United Nations rather than *autonomie interne*: it sounded better and might amount to much the same thing.³² The French government was relying, rather optimistically, on maintaining the Treaty of Fez and the

31. It is also worth noting that in May 1955 there was a renewed outbreak of Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) insurgency in Eastern Cameroon.

32. See Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, p. 458.

rights it gave to France in matters of defense and foreign affairs.³³ Negotiations on this question had not yet begun. Nor had the precise composition of the Council of the Throne been determined, and much still seemed to depend on this.

There followed, however, an altogether unexpected speeding up of events. On 25 October 1955, al-Glawi, seeing full well that his own cause was now quite definitely lost, declared ben Youssef to be the rightful sovereign, called for his prompt restoration and professed his allegiance. On 29 October, Arafa announced his abdication and by 6 November the French government had recognized ben Youssef as His Majesty Mohammed V. Thus, what from the very beginning had been declared unacceptable, at least for some time still to come—namely, ben Youssef's return to the throne—had transpired even before the detailed negotiations on independence and interdependence had begun. Hopes that the Treaty of Fez would remain in force and that France would continue to exercise control over Morocco's external affairs as if Morocco were still a protectorate, had been effectively scuppered.

So the means chosen by Edgar Faure to maintain momentum—the virtual ultimatum to Arafa, participation of the nationalists at the Aix-les-Bains conference, and the dispatch of envoys to Madagascar to obtain ben Youssef's approval—all before the composition of the Council to the Throne and of a Moroccan government could be agreed—were in his eyes perfectly justified, in that they secured an agreement with the more moderate nationalists who were prepared to consent to interdependence. But was it the interdependence that had been hoped for?³⁴ Once ben Youssef was back on the throne and al-Glawi had offered his allegiance, all the emphasis was on independence. Only when this had been explicitly recognized, notably by abrogation of the Treaty of Fez, was interdependence negotiated.

The circumstantial nature of the agreements with Morocco was clearly exposed when elections were held two months later on 2 January 1956. These produced, on the one hand, a new center-left parliamentary majority, favorably disposed to demands for internal self-government in both black Africa and Algeria, but also a highly vocal populist group, the so-called Poujardists, who owed some of their electoral success—an unexpected fifty seats—to the way they had championed the cause of French settlers in Algeria and North

33. A government statement on 1 October 1955 still included a reference to this treaty, and references to French responsibilities for defense and foreign affairs were still being made on 15 October. See Latour, *Vérités*, pp. 183–84.

34. Even the sceptical and pragmatic Edgar Faure had expected at the very least some agreement with Morocco—and, a fortiori, Tunisia—on some form of supranational authority for matters of common concern, such as foreign affairs and defense. Faure, *Mémoires*, vol. 2, p. 635.

Africa generally.³⁵ The new government, led by Guy Mollet, was allowed to proceed with a measure of internal self-government in black Africa and Madagascar, but similar proposals for Algeria were consistently blocked, not so much in Parliament as by the settler lobby and the authorities in Algeria, including the army. The regime, held to ransom in Algeria, had finally to confess its impotence and give way to de Gaulle.

THE FIFTH REPUBLIC

When de Gaulle returned to power in 1958, his precise intentions in matters of overseas policy had not been disclosed, (indeed, were perhaps uncertain even in his own mind), and he aroused contradictory hopes within France and Africa. His first priority was to establish a regime in which he, as president, would be able to act as he saw fit, especially in matters requiring the exercise of discretionary power in foreign policy or national emergencies. He counted on such powers, and his own political ascendancy, to restore the government's authority in Algeria and French prestige generally. This was a precondition to any formulation of policy.

Any new constitution would, however, have to include, as had the constitution of the Fourth Republic, at least some reference to those parts of the republic that lay overseas. He aimed at retaining existing arrangements, certainly at discouraging any immediate demands for independence. The task of drafting the new constitution was kept firmly in the government's own hands, subject only to the advice of a committee to which some overseas deputies had been appointed. On Algeria, the constitution of 1958 was as silent as that of 1946. Algeria remained a group of *départements sui generis*, requiring its own—unspecified—solution. On the future of black Africa and Madagascar, territories that had in 1956 acquired a measure of internal self-government, and where demands for independence were beginning to be voiced more openly, there was strong disagreement among the African leaders. Some, led by Houphouët-Boigny, rejected independence in favor of a federal-type integration with France, considering this the best way of achieving what he believed to be most necessary: a sure and speedy improvement in African living standards. Others favored independence and a less binding confederal type of association with France. Underlying the dispute was a difference of opinion about the future of the two federations of French West and Equatorial Africa. From Houphouët-Boigny's point of view, it was better if each overseas territory had its own direct links with France: any intermediate African grouping was an unnecessary incumbrance. Those who were

35. No elections were held in Algeria itself, where a state of insecurity would have made well nigh impossible free and fair elections.

aiming to achieve independence held that it would be more easily obtained if the federations remained intact. Houphouët-Boigny took the view that strength lay only in union with France; the others relied on their own unity as a source of strength.

When the Constitutional Advisory Committee became bogged down by this African quarrel, de Gaulle intervened. He asked the committee to agree on the list of matters deemed still to require a common jurisdiction. These would continue to be the responsibility of institutions in which the Africans would have a consultative rather than a decisive role. All other matters would be devolved and the Africans would decide for themselves whether to exercise their autonomous powers jointly or separately. Thus de Gaulle pronounced himself firmly in favor of maintaining Franco-African integration and made the question of the Africans own primary federation a subordinate issue. Moreover, acceptance of a single central jurisdiction for all those matters in which French direction or cooperation was still deemed essential or desirable was to be the only available means of securing it. The right to become independent was not being denied, but if independence was preferred it would have to be without French support.

The Constitutional Advisory Committee endorsed this draconian limitation of choice, rejecting in the process a subcommittee's recommendation that a third choice be kept open. This was to have been a contractual confederation formed by independent states committing themselves to acting jointly, in ways and means to be agreed on, and reviewed every five years in the light of experience.³⁶

One crucial last-minute amendment was, however, made to the draft constitution. De Gaulle decided to sound out African opinion more thoroughly by visiting several African countries and Madagascar, prior to submitting the draft to a referendum. Realizing in the course of his tour that acceptance of the proposed constitution would be jeopardized if it foreclosed the right to independence, de Gaulle inserted a right to secede. This allowed the "confederalists" to remain integrated with France for the time being without foregoing the option of independence some time in the future. Only Guinea, which under Sékou Touré's leadership had already embarked on a campaign for immediate independence, said no to the proposed community and bore the consequences of an immediate rupture with France.

The determination to become independent was not postponed for long. The example was set not so much by Guinea as by the two trustee territories, Togo and Eastern Cameroon, to which the newly formed Community did not

³⁶. The proceedings of the Constitutional Advisory Committee have not been published. Contemporary interviews with Senghor and other members of the committee are the source of the information.

apply. They were confident of achieving their independence in the very near future through United Nations auspices, and they counted on being able to negotiate a continuation of their links with France. Also, from within the Community itself, Senghor and Modibo Keita began to press de Gaulle to agree to its amendment so that the Mali Federation could be independent without having to secede: in other words, to turn the community into a confederation.

De Gaulle, in acceding to this request in December 1959, left Houphouët-Boigny high and dry. The Community would no longer be the tight federation Houphouët-Boigny had wanted. Bitterly disappointed but not to be outdone, he bided his time. Once the detailed bilateral agreements between France and the Mali Federation had been finalized and the French Parliament had agreed to the necessary revision of the 1958 constitution, he likewise demanded independence for the Ivory Coast. He refused, however, membership of the revised Community, which to his way of thinking had lost all purpose. When others followed Houphouët-Boigny's example, the Community collapsed. It had been undermined by the disagreements among African leaders on the nature of their continuing links with France. In 1958, Houphouët-Boigny's preference for federal integration with France had prevailed, given de Gaulle's support. By 1960, the notion of independence and the preservation of links through bilateral agreements led the field, with de Gaulle's acquiescence.

In the much more difficult circumstances of Algeria, one can trace an analogous but far more traumatic and tortuous step-by-step accommodation of nationalist demands. There were four distinct stages. Initially—from the autumn of 1958 to that of 1959—the prime objective was to induce the *Armée de la Libération Nationale* (ALN) to agree to a cease-fire. An offer of "peace with honour" was first made in October 1958 and repeated at the end of January 1959. The offer having met with no response, the armed forces, reinforced by eighty thousand to bring their total strength to nearly half a million, began a series of offensive operations designed to drive the ALN from its hideouts in the mountains.

The ALN was certainly badly shaken, but was there ever much chance, it might be asked, of achieving a cease-fire so long as the longer-term political objectives remained undefined? De Gaulle gave no clear indication of what was to be Algeria's future. He had restricted himself in October 1958 to announcing the Constantine Plan, a five-year investment program for heavy industry, schools, and housing, coupled with a 10 percent quota for Muslims in the administration. The obscurity of its implications—did it imply France's determination to remain in Algeria, did it simply demonstrate the advantages of continuing some links with France?—was matched by the apparent ag-

nosticism of de Gaulle's accompanying remark, "I believe that there is absolutely no point in trying to prescribe what can only transpire in the course of events."³⁷ De Gaulle did little to dispel the uncertainty. In January 1959 he spoke of Algeria taking its place—*une place de choix*—within the Community and in the following April declared that *l'Algérie de papa* belonged to the past. But this was quite insufficient to induce the ALN to lay down its arms. At the same time, it was enough to handicap the military, for only an unambiguous and uncontradicted statement of France's intention to maintain an administrative and military presence in Algeria could have induced a hesitant civilian population to collaborate more actively with the French and oblige the nationalist leadership to agree to a cease-fire.

This first stage, although it failed in its objectives, was perhaps unavoidable. De Gaulle believed in his own powers of charismatic leadership. These were now put to the test within Algeria—and found insufficient. Nor had de Gaulle to test too severely the loyalty of the armed forces and of his own ministers. Many army commanders and his own prime minister had declared themselves resolute opponents of Algerian independence. By putting the armed forces in Algeria under new command and redirecting it to new tasks—mobile offensive warfare, instead of counterrevolutionary psychological warfare—de Gaulle may have been taking an essential step in the consolidation of his command of the army's basic loyalty.³⁸

De Gaulle's next step—in September 1959—was to concede the principle of self-determination, so placing a severe strain on that loyalty. De Gaulle, moving on to this second stage, offered a three-fold choice: independence, which he preferred to call "secession"; total integration, which he called *françisation*; or a measure of internal self-government later referred to as "association." It was timed so as to forestall international and especially American criticism. It disarmed President Eisenhower, whose visit to France in early September was thereby turned into a great success, and it ensured America's benevolent abstention at the United Nations when, in November, renewed efforts were made to debate Algeria in the General Assembly.

The inclusion of independence among the options drove the more extreme partisans of *Algérie française* into open opposition and violent protests. They were unable, however, to carry the day, not in Parliament, or in the party, or even in Algiers. Parliament voted decisively in favor of the government by 421

37. A rather free translation of "*je crois tout à fait inutile de figer d'avance dans des mots ce que de toute manière l'entreprise va peu à peu dessiner.*"

38. This is strongly argued by Jean Lacouture in *De Gaulle*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1986), p. 39. Lacouture's account of de Gaulle's Algerian policy is most useful. It incorporates information obtained by interviewing many of those involved in the formulation and execution of policy at the highest level.

votes to 23. The party debate, in mid-November, was dominated by Soustelle who, although still a minister, was by now totally at odds with de Gaulle. It revealed the party's reservations even if it ended with an anodyne motion, limiting the damage. In Algiers, though, a sociological mutation "giving the crowd military force and bestowing on the army battalions the exuberance of the streets" had taken place.³⁹ There it really was touch and go who would prevail: de Gaulle or the thousands who on 24 January 1960 took to the streets, erected barricades, and did not hesitate to use weapons to hold the authorities to ransom.

De Gaulle's policy of self-determination survived the challenge. He refused to give the partisans of *l'Algérie française*—and his loyal prime minister—any satisfaction other than to say that he would be overjoyed if the Muslims were to choose the solution that would be *la plus française*—another example of Gaullian ambiguity. Instead, he called the army to order, appealed directly to the people for support and relied on a belief in his own indispensability.

Addressing the army, de Gaulle did not mince his words. On a visit to Algeria, prior to making his offer of self-determination, he informed the army commanders of his intentions and told them quite bluntly, "You are not in the army for the army's sake. You are France's army. Only because of France, for France, and in the service of France, do you have your existence. And he who I am, with his rank and his responsibilities, has to be obeyed so that France might live."⁴⁰ He had to repeat the admonition when it seemed that the army would have to be used to restore order in Algiers at the end of January.

Whether such bare, and haughty, claims to legitimate authority helped de Gaulle very much, may be doubted. What counted with most of his audience was his own reputation as a defender of French interests and the realization that few if any alternatives to de Gaulle's leadership actually existed. Nearer to the mark was the observation, made by the government's *délegué-général* in Algeria, Paul Delouvrier. In a desperate last-minute appeal for the barricades to be dismantled in time to avert inevitable bloodshed, he frankly admitted that many army officers were hesitant and some even advising the commander in chief, General Challe, to disobey, but he warned "May 13th cannot be repeated." In May 1958, de Gaulle had been a popular substitute for the discredited Fourth Republic. In January 1959, there was no substitute for de Gaulle. "If de Gaulle were to retire to Colombey, would France ever forgive the army?" was Delouvrier's telling question. De Gaulle had not only authority: he alone still offered France the chance of an acceptable settle-

39. Ibid., p. 87.

40. Ibid., p. 70. His informant is General Bourdis.

ment, and he had popular support. It was this realization that kept most of the army loyal.

In fact, de Gaulle had not yet conceded very much. The offer of self-determination was heavily qualified. The two Saharan *départements*, with their valuable oil and gas deposits, were excluded. A precondition was agreement on a cease-fire, and the consultation of the Algerian electorate would not be for several years thereafter. Moreover, independence had been equated by de Gaulle with secession, bringing with it impoverishment, political anarchy, and Communist dictatorship. It was a demon to be exorcised by the Algerians themselves. If, however, they chose secession, France would not abandon those who wished to remain with France. They would be regrouped and resettled.

It was not an offer acceptable to the Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne (GPRA). In response to de Gaulle's invitation of 10 November to discuss the modalities of a cease-fire, it nominated as its delegates the five leaders held in French custody. It was a way of welcoming the principle of self-determination while rejecting what was actually on offer.

The start of negotiations for a peaceful settlement was the third stage, and virtually the whole of 1960 was devoted to clarifying the real possibilities—as distinct from partisan views, which could not be imposed. De Gaulle still clung to the option of association and hoped to be able to carry with him not only the bulk of the French electorate and a disciplined army but also enough of the Muslims to counterbalance the FLN, as well as sufficient international opinion. The FLN for its part insisted on discussing political issues prior to any cease-fire and on being treated as the sole representative of Algerian opinion. It relied on being able to continue its armed resistance, to maintain its ascendancy in the eyes of the Muslim population, and to have the better of the argument in the international arena.

It must be admitted that de Gaulle had no success in shifting the FLN. Secret discussions were held with some ALN leaders from March to June 1960, notably with Si Saleh, head of the very important Wilaya Four and the key sector around the capital. A meeting took place with GPRA spokesmen in June, at Melun. But all of this came to nothing.⁴¹ Hopes in negotiating a settlement began to fade as the stalemate dragged on throughout the summer of 1960, to the advantage of extremists on both sides. Those of the ALN intensified their terrorism. Those whom de Gaulle had put on trial or sanctioned for their part

⁴¹ The holding of talks with the GPRA at Melun seems to have put paid to the talks with Si Saleh. Given more time, Si Saleh might have proved more conciliatory. De Gaulle's critics certainly thought so and accused him of throwing away the last opportunity of safeguarding a French presence in Algeria. See Lacouture, *De Gaulle*, pp. 116–27.

in the January 1959 insurrection took on the role of martyrs in a cause betrayed.

Determined to restore the momentum, de Gaulle took a series of steps which in due course did lead to the final stage, that of actually negotiating the terms of a settlement. He repeated his offer of self-determination in early November 1960 but appeared to rearrange the options. The emphasis was now on Algeria's choice to be "with France or against France," and the Algeria choosing to be with France would be an *Algérie algérienne*, a *république algérienne* with "its government, institutions and laws." This came very close to denying that independence meant secession, even if he did go on to speak about choosing to be "united with France" for specified purposes. It was an intimation of a possibility rather than a clear shift of position.⁴² The same could be said of his decision to establish within his government a Ministry for Algerian Affairs, for it confirmed Algeria's separate identity. The person appointed as minister of state, Louis Joxe, was, moreover, a known liberal. The impression that a new initiative was definitely under way was heightened by de Gaulle's announcement that he was to make a direct appeal to the French electorate for its support. The electorate, asked on 8 January 1961 to approve a parliamentary bill that provided for the eventual consultation of the Algerian people and for the establishment of interim executive and legislative authorities in Algeria, was in effect being asked to give de Gaulle a personal vote of confidence and a "doctor's mandate" for bringing about a settlement in Algeria. He won a convincing majority, 75 percent of the vote, amounting to 56 percent of the registered electorate. In Algeria itself, where the FLN had urged abstention, the result was less clear-cut: an affirmative vote, but a heavy percentage of nonvoters—more than 42 percent.

More indicative of Algerian opinion were the mass demonstrations that had taken place in mid-December 1961 when de Gaulle was on another of his "tours of inspection." The occasion was used by the FLN, as well as by the Front pour l'Algérie Française, to demonstrate the strength of their respective followings. By the time de Gaulle returned to Paris, cutting short his visit because of the violent clashes in which more than fifty lives were lost, there was little doubt left as to the strength of FLN support. De Gaulle also left his generals in little doubt as to the expediency of coming to terms with *Algérie algérienne*, given the surge of popular consciousness the insurrectionary movement had managed to arouse.⁴³

That de Gaulle had prepared another decisive step was confirmed in the

42. Jean Lacouture's comment (*ibid.*, p. 133) that de Gaulle was proposing "the independence of a sovereign state" is to put too categorical an interpretation on de Gaulle's words.

43. For a detailed account of de Gaulle's tour of inspection and his conclusions, see Louis Terrenoire, *De Gaulle et l'Algérie*, 1947–54 (Paris, 1964), pp. 203–17.

course of a further round of secret meetings with the GPRA. Whereas hitherto the only matter he had been willing to see discussed was the arrangement for an honourable cease-fire, he was now prepared to see opened up for discussion his offer of self-determination and the political issues it raised: notably the exclusion of the two Saharan *départements*, the future of the French settlers, and the maintenance of French armed forces in Algeria. By the end of March 1961, it had been agreed that official negotiations should begin as soon as possible.

It was this decision, and some of de Gaulle's subsequent public pronouncements,⁴⁴ that provoked a revolt by a number of generals—Challe, Zeller, Jouhaud, Salan, Gardy, and Faure (all retired or on the inactive list)—supported by some regimental commanders and their troops. Out-numbered and outmaneuvered by de Gaulle's direct order to the troops (listening on their transistor radios) to obey his orders and not those of the rebels, the rebellion collapsed within a few days (Robert Buron, one of de Gaulle's ministers seized by the rebels, wrote afterward of the "victory of the transistor sets"). This left de Gaulle free, though under constant danger of assassination, to pursue the negotiations.

These proved long and arduous. They began at Evian on 20 May 1961, were suspended on 30 June, and, apart from a brief exchange of views at the end of July, were not resumed until February 1962, after de Gaulle had removed the final stumbling block, which was France's claim to sovereign rights in the Sahara.

Looking back over the evolution of events, from the autumn of 1958 to the spring of 1962, one can identify three major turning points: the decision to offer self-determination in September 1959, the acceptance of the FLN as the authentic voice of Algerian nationalism in December 1960, and the recognition of Algerian claims to the two *départements* in the Sahara in September 1961. The first turning point opened up the prospects of independence and the second altered substantially the nature of the issues. They were no longer as originally set out by de Gaulle—secession, *françisation*, or association. There was a single point at issue, whether independence was to result in a rupture or in cooperation with France. When the consultation, confined to France, eventually took place, it simply sought approval for Algeria to become *un Etat coopérant avec la France*. The third turning point was the decision to pay the price that the Algerians demanded in return for agreeing to France's rights in the exploitation of oil and gas deposits in the Sahara, to civic and property rights for the French settlers, and to the use of the naval

44. Notably his use of the argument, at a press conference on 11 April, that France would certainly derive financial benefit from Algerian independence, and his comment when it was suggested that France might be displaced by one of the superpowers: "I wish them both joy."

base at Mars-al-kebir for a period of fifteen years. Important questions of principle may have been decided in September 1959 and December 1960, but an agreed settlement lay in the balance right up to the final days of May 1962 when mutual concessions were finally agreed.

Commenting on de Gaulle's battle with the FLN, Alistair Horne compared it to an onion. "Layer by layer had the onion of French demands been peeled in the face of Algerian refusal to compromise: first, the French insistence on a prior cease-fire; then her refusal to recognize the GPRA as the sole *entrelocuteur valable*; then de Gaulle's requirement of a four-year hiatus between a 'cease-fire' and 'self-determination'; then the Sahara; and then the safeguard of dual nationality for the *pieds noirs*. And so on!"⁴⁵

De Gaulle, however, was pressed for time.⁴⁶ He had his plans for France's own independence, based on its force de frappe, and for giving France a new role in world affairs, namely, as a leader of so-called third-world opinion. He had no wish to see these held in check by a costly and useless colonial war. That he was too much in a hurry has been argued even by such sympathetic critics as Jean Lacouture.⁴⁷ Yet it must be said that the negotiations were by no means a one-sided affair. The Algerians may have won their independence, but de Gaulle insisted on substantial linkages. Just as in the case of Morocco, the moderates had prevailed over the more extreme points of view in both camps. The last word remained nonetheless with the fanatical opponents of concessions to the FLN, however reasonable. The Organisation l'Armée Secrète (OAS), the organization devoted to ridding France of de Gaulle and to wreaking vengeance on his handiwork, embarked on a campaign of terror and destruction. What de Gaulle had so laboriously striven to achieve, a potentially fruitful cooperation between the Algerians and the French settlers, was almost immediately and very substantially nullified. Virtually all that remained possible was a measure of intergovernmental cooperation.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

When *Algérie française*, the cause that many Frenchmen had prized the most, became *l'Algérie algérienne* and independent, the colonial lobby had

45. Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–62* (London, 1977), p. 251.

46. "One has to be on the move or to die," de Gaulle is reported to have said at the end of a meeting with his ministers held on 26 August 1959, prior to deciding on his offer of self-determination. Lacouture, *De Gaulle*, p. 67.

47. Lacouture, *De Gaulle*, p. 249–50.

48. The original agreements and their subsequent atrophy are well analyzed in Inga Brandell, *Les rapports franco-algériens depuis 1962* (Paris, 1981).

lost its final battle. Decolonization had been as much an internal struggle as a confrontation with nationalism, especially after the defeat in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu. France's response to nationalist demands varied over both time and space. Where independence parties had become established prior to or during the 1939–1945 war, they had initially encountered strong French resistance founded in the belief that the overseas peoples and the people of France, professing and owing allegiance to a common corpus of ideals, were thereby so closely associated, spiritually and historically, that they were prepared to acknowledge a common sovereign authority. We have seen that this idealization of the relationship persisted as an ideology but waxed and waned in its influence over official French policy. Those who never abandoned the ideology felt betrayed, first during 1954–1955 by the politicians of the Fourth Republic, especially Edgar Faure and Antoine Pinay, the architects of Moroccan independence, and then, the supreme betrayal, by de Gaulle in Algeria. Their marginalization within the French political system, made possible by determined leadership from the Right, was clearly decisive in bringing about a negotiated settlement, first in Morocco, and later in Algeria. The political skills used by Mendès-France and especially Edgar Faure to outwit the ministerial and parliamentary allies of the settler lobby during 1954–1955 were no less remarkable than those employed by de Gaulle during 1961–1962. In one sense, Edgar Faure had the hardest task, for he was confined by the parliamentary system. Parliament reflected the pressures of public opinion, was susceptible to the way events were reported, and was anxious to be reassured at each stage. Initially unprepared for, indeed resistant to, the idea of independence, it allowed itself to be persuaded by a government that was itself feeling its way forward, step by step, to an agreement with nationalist leaders who would not to be satisfied with anything less than independence. Algeria, however, remained the supreme test. De Gaulle had to reckon with open defiance on the part of the European settlers and their military allies. Thanks to his own personal prestige he was able to retain the support of the bulk of the armed forces and to use the enhanced powers of the presidency to make direct and decisive appeals to the French electorate.

Decolonization was thus the combined handiwork of political forces within France and overseas. Political leadership in France itself, no less than the obduracy of overseas nationalism, shifted the balance of forces within the French political system in favor of compromise settlements. But French reluctance to concede independence as a general principle made for hard bargaining in many an instance. The concession of independence was limited to each specific case. Once made, it facilitated negotiations for the continuation of a French presence. Moreover, shifts within French leadership influenced

the leaders of nationalist movements in their judgment about means to secure independence—force or diplomacy, or some combination of military and political pressure. The willingness and ability of French governments to decolonize had repeatedly to be put to the test. In the cases of Tunisia and Morocco, mutually acceptable settlements were delayed until the coming to power of leaders such as Mendès-France, Edgar Faure, and Antoine Pinay. Their judgment that French interests were not likely to be jeopardized by a transfer of power to nationalists such as Bourguiba and even ben Youssef, and their ability to outmaneuver the powerful settler lobby, made settlements possible. In the case of Algeria, the struggle continued until de Gaulle reached the conclusion that no alternative to the FLN existed; there was no one else with whom to negotiate a viable settlement. The French electorate and army had to be persuaded to accept that reality. In the rest of Africa, demands were at first not so clearly oriented toward independence, and where movements in favor of independence did take hold, as in Madagascar and Cameroon, they were more easily contained. The decision of December 1959 to accede to the Mali Federation's request for independence conceded the general principle for the region as a whole.

The process of French decolonization has therefore to be seen as a series of specific instances. The nature and tempo both of overseas demands and French responses varied considerably from region to region and from time to time. There were varying degrees of recognized interdependence and consequently variations in the actual transfer of power or, to use French terminology, in the *transfert des compétences*. The nature of the transfer is, in fact, expressed much better by the juridical term *compétence*, used in the plural, than by the term *power*, used in the singular. A *transfert des compétences* was usually made conditional on some powers being used for agreed purposes and in accordance with specified procedures. France thereby retained an interest and a voice in the exercise of these powers, even though they were attributes of a sovereignty that had been transferred. Nationalists quite rightly set great store by the recognition of sovereignty. It signified independence, even if at the time the balance of power and a measure of prudence limited the range of powers that could be exercised independently. Moreover, periodic renegotiations of the initial agreements testify to a continuation of the process of decolonization. After two or more decades of independence the structural contours of the colonial state have begun to be eroded through the exercise of sovereign power, limited though it may still be by constraints, old and new.

The main casualty of decolonization was not the network of French interests and francophone linkages, which bilateral agreements largely brought into line with the transfer of sovereignty. Rather, it was the means

of giving expression to a sense of overall unity. All organization for joint multilateral consultation on matters of common concern had disappeared. Their disappearance, however, proved to be an opportunity to build afresh. It left the field clear for the advocates of what came to be known, for the want of a better term, as *la Francophonie*. This refers to the totality of all those countries or peoples making use of the French language, whether as a mother tongue, or as an official language, or as a medium of instruction, or as the language preferred for international discourse. A shared language became an organizing principle. It served to bring together in a wide variety of non-governmental associations persons of different nationalities for whom the French language was indispensable—writers, scientists, teachers, journalists, and parliamentarians. Each of these quasi-official associations had its own professional *raison d'être* but in addition shared an interest in maintaining both the integrity of the French language and its status as a world language. Collectively they expressed a sense of francophone solidarity. Rooted in the use of the language was a characteristically French mode of thinking, a manner of approach, a set of assumptions, and a cultural heritage. It was on this basis that the militants of *la Francophonie* sought to maintain francophone cohesion and French prestige. The network of ad hoc associations acted as an extensive pressure group within each country, as well as transnationally, and served to promote common policies that nurtured the idea of a common identity over and above any specific differences. It was, moreover, conceived as a substratum upon which to found intergovernmental institutions, including—notably—periodic gatherings of francophone heads of state.

But at this level the movement encountered serious difficulties of its own making. The francophone net was widely cast. It included, for example, the French-speaking Canadians, but only Canada, more anglophone than francophone, had the right to be represented at any official summit. The countries of the Maghreb, also considered to be part of *la Francophonie*, had governments committed to policies of arabization and hence were unfavorably disposed to official governmental participation in anything so specifically francophone.⁴⁹

In default of a general francophone summit, which some would not want or be able to attend, summit meetings limited to francophone black African states began to be convened by President Pompidou in the 1970s. After an uncertain start, they became increasingly attractive but ceased to be ex-

49. For a fuller account of *la Francophonie*, see S. K. Panter-Brick, "La Francophonie with Special Reference to Educational Links and Language Problems," in W. H. Morris-Jones and Georges Fischer, eds., *Decolonisation and After: The British and French Experience* (London, 1980).

clusively francophone when invitations were extended under Giscard d'Estaing's presidency to lusophone and eventually all the African states. These black African summits came to serve a somewhat different political purpose, parallel to, but not to be confused with, *la Francophonie*. It was left to President Mitterand, profiting from an improvement in Franco-Canadian relations, to convene in February 1986 the first summit representing "countries having in common the use of French." The moment was particularly well chosen for attracting widespread representation. The cosmopolitan spread of *la Francophonie* was underlined by the choice of speakers at the inaugural session: President Mitterand, the prime ministers of Belgium, Canada, and Tunisia, the presidents of the Malagasy Republic and Senegal, and the head of the Vietnamese delegation. The only notable absentees were Cameroon, faithful to its vocation as a country officially anglophone as well as francophone, and Algeria, which puts English on a par with French as languages of wider communication. The speech by the Malagasy president was particularly well received, for President Ratsiraka had in the past been notably outspoken in his criticisms of French neocolonialism.⁵⁰ All told, forty-one countries were represented, over half by their heads of state or heads of government.⁵¹ This 1986 summit was the final step in reconstituting *l'ensemble français*, of considerable symbolic importance. It gave collective recognition and legitimacy to all the efforts of preceding decades, efforts devoted to making as far as possible the preservation of a French presence a condition of decolonization.

50. He said, "I am not coming to Canossa but . . . I have been educated in French and I am proud to speak French . . . besides, my country uses French for purposes of wider communication and higher learning. . . ."

51. Canada was represented by the federal prime minister and the prime ministers of two provinces, Quebec and New Brunswick, Belgium by the prime minister and the minister for its francophone community. There were representatives *inter alia* of Egypt, Morocco, Laos, Louisiana, Luxembourg, Switzerland, St. Lucia, Mauritius, and Guinea.

4. *The Transfer of Economic Power in French-Speaking West Africa*

CATHERINE COQUERY-VIDROVITCH

In 1958 the African territories of the French Union—French West Africa (AOF) plus Togo and French Equatorial Africa (AEF) plus Cameroon—appeared very poorly equipped, despite the considerable investment efforts of the Investment Fund for Economic and Social Development (FIDES) over the preceding twelve years. They seemed to have negligible production potential apart from tropical export crops based on *économie de traite*. Twenty years later the economic configuration of the states has been extraordinarily transformed, even if today the situation seems catastrophic for many diverse reasons: dramatic droughts in the Sahel, massive debt, insufficient foodstuffs, and the collapse on the world market of the price of export products.

Yet the continuing population explosion has been accompanied by accelerated urban growth, the proliferation of port facilities (such as San Pedro in the Ivory Coast, Cotonou in Benin, and Owendo in Gabon) and the construction of enormous dams (Edéa II in Cameroon, Kossou in the Ivory Coast, and Manantali in Mali). Agro-industrial developments (on the Senegal and Niger rivers, in the northern Ivory Coast, in western Burkina Faso, etc.) have multiplied, whatever one may think of the often illusory and always disappointing results. The problem raised here is not to determine whether the “transfer” of powers, from colonization to independence, eased the way for these transformations (that seems obvious), but to what extent these transformations, ubiquitous in Africa over the past twenty years, have been oriented, determined, hampered, or modified by the seemingly specific forms adopted in the French context of decolonization. Was the economic content of French-style decolonization different from the others or not? If the weight of neo-colonialism made itself felt more heavily here than elsewhere, what remains

of it today? It will be seen in the following discussion that in spite of an extraordinary continuity of institutions, personnel, and channels of communication, a real transfer had been effected by the middle of the first decade after independence—revealed, among other ways, by the wave of renewals of cooperation agreements. One of its instruments, notwithstanding the apparent persistence of the French grip (which still makes full use of its two major weapons: currency, the CFA franc, and culture, the French language), is the multilateralization of relations by means of a new departure: the establishment of a “Eurafrican” market under EEC auspices. In short, after twenty years, and in spite of this unique course of events, French-speaking Africa remains quite marked culturally, but it hardly exhibits especially original economic features when compared with other African states.

THE POSTWAR ECONOMIC BALANCE SHEET IN FRENCH AFRICA

On the eve of World War II there was a fairly clear realization that colonial mentalities had to be changed. But achievements remained quite mediocre.¹ It took the shock of the war to convince the ruling circles of the necessity of facing up to the fact. The disruption of traditional commercial patterns, and then the soon vital strategic role of the African continent, made it indispensable to carry out on a large scale the transformation of primary production so long foreseen but never implemented. The break with the past imposed by circumstances made it possible to measure the limits and dangers of the policy of “falling back upon the empire” inaugurated by the Customs Union of 1928 and reinforced by the contingency measures taken as a result of the great depression. The ever-closer integration of the colonies with the metropole’s economic sphere through mutual exchanges had dangerously isolated them from the world market. Finally, the opening up of the continent during the war to other ideas and other peoples made inevitable a practical intervention by the metropolises, thenceforth obliged to guarantee to the Africans a political, economic, and social compensation for their participation in the conflict.

With the reorganized Colonial Development and Welfare Fund in 1940, and the creation of agencies to supervise large firms as a prelude to the marketing boards, Great Britain had once again set the example. As for France, the Vichy government very soon undertook to renew earlier efforts: it

1. For the preceding period see C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, “L’impérialisme français en Afrique noire: idéologie impériale et politique d’équipement, 1924–1975,” *Relations internationales* 7 (1978): 261–82; “Vichy et l’industrialisation aux colonies,” *Revue d’histoire de la 2^{me} guerre mondiale*, 114 (1979): 69–94; and “The Colonial Economy of Former French, Belgian and Portuguese Zones, 1914–1936,” in A. Adu Boahen, ed., *General History of Africa*, vol. 7 (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 351–81.

was then, it seems, that the Directorate of Colonies assembled a team of technicians (today we would say "technocrats") concerned with the orderly organization of the empire's production, made urgent by the war. For, from 1940 to 1945, equipment imports were slowing down everywhere. The change of mentalities and the necessity for effective solutions took concrete form only by the end of hostilities, at the Brazzaville Conference (January–February 1944).

The tone adopted during the conference demonstrates well the break with the past:

Classical political economy teaches us that the three factors in production are nature, capital, and labor. Overseas, where nature is so often hostile and capital insufficient, production has sometimes demanded a contribution by labor disproportionate to that of capital, an exhausting effort which, in the end, harms the colony's rational development.²

It was no longer a question of considering "little steps," in the form of commercial regulations at best adequate to correct, after the fact, the anarchy of production revealed by recurring local crises, but of pursuing "a broad-minded, realistic and rational policy" through the agreed choice of a production program drawn up for the entire colonial domain. The concern for guaranteeing "to the African peoples a larger share of the goods they produce" thus responded as much to the moral and social ends propounded as to a revised concept of colonial economy:

On one hand, the quantity of raw material produced by the colonies will make possible a contribution to the satisfaction of needs that will appear after the war. On the other, increasing the natives' purchasing power will result in new markets that will enable the merchandise of the industrialized countries to find new outlets.

Hence the conclusion "that a country's industrialization, by increasing its inhabitants' purchasing power, must assist its progress.

Four broad principles were therefore declared. The first was a policy of population growth as a fundamental condition of economic take-off, which presupposes "a plan for material development dictated by the concern to raise the African peoples rapidly to a better standard of living." Second, the necessity of industrialization so, precisely, as to make up for the scarcity and unreliability of hand labor by mechanization: a prudent industrialization, of course, that would "not to create a black proletariat" and would exclude any

2. "Les grandes lignes de la politique économique," Brazzaville Conference file, S.O.M., Arch. Nat., Aff. économiques, 1920–1940.

objective of “self-sufficiency with respect to the metropole”—which eliminated labor-intensive heavy and defense industries. In this sphere, only “imperial industries” (naval facilities, workshops for mechanical repairs and maintenance) under close control by the metropole were contemplated; similarly, the more modern sectors (forestry, mining, specialized plantations) would still be reserved for Europeans, who would serve as “technicians, guides, and managers of cooperatives and provident societies [*sociétés de prévoyance*].”

At the same time, in addition to the simple processes of transforming raw materials for export that already existed, an overall choice was made in favor of import-substitution industries, both for export (edible oils, canneries, sawmills, tanneries) and for local consumption—“in remote regions going so far as products packaged for retail sale” (cement, charcoal briquettes, food industries, footwear, spinning and weaving). They even contemplated the processing of bauxite and iron ore where extraction and transportation conditions were favorable, with the possibility, in exceptional cases, of electrical smelting where cheap hydroelectric power could be obtained near at hand: all of this “with the three-fold aim of increasing the variety of exportable products, encouraging some local autonomy, and reducing costly internal transportation of goods.”

The third principle, induced by “the shortcomings of private enterprise,” entailed instituting “a ten-year program of works and equipment procurement arising from the need to reinforce and modernize the infrastructure,” financed by the metropole “as long as the colonies cannot assume simultaneously the expenses of their daily life and those of improving their infrastructure.” Set up for the entire colonial domain, the plan invoked in particular the principle of “international division of labor . . . distributing the tasks according to the aptitudes of each territory.” Hence the idea of basing the program “on as precise a knowledge as possible of the resources of each country” by means of public organisms (for edible oils, textiles, mineral prospecting), that in fact gave birth to a series of Overseas Research Institutes such as Office pour la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer (ORSTOM) and Bureau pour la Recherche Biologique et Minière” (BRGM).

Finally, this planned economy was to be integrated “no longer into a purely French sphere but into the *world economy*,” within “a more universal international economic program, equally planned.” Hence the explicit rejection of the “colonial pact’s” provision drawing the profile of the “customs personality,” empowering the territorial councils to regulate customs duties, permit duty-free entry or prohibit certain imports, subject only to the approval of the metropolitan authorities. This was a complete about-face from prewar attitudes, when any initiative in this field was blocked by administrative inertia, since a failure of the French government to reply within three months was tantamount to a refusal: henceforth it would mean ratification. It should be

noted that here, too, the stimulus had come from the Vichy government, constrained by circumstances to accord "customs autonomy"; Free France, for the same reasons, revived the idea.

THE RESULTS: 1946–1958

A broad infrastructural effort followed. Aside from a minor impact by Marshall Plan aid, the initiative remained almost exclusively French until the statute of 1956. Foreign participation came late, and international aid—as from the U.N. or the *Fond Européen de Développement* (FED)—later still, the French contribution constituting a considerable proportion. In constant-value terms the overall French infrastructural financing reached its peak in 1951–1952. As provided for in the Brazzaville resolutions, the French share was predominant, almost always at least half of public investments in French West Africa, notwithstanding the relative weight of contributions from the internal budget; the major role in France's share was played by public finance (FIDES and Caisse Centrale). Hence the emphasis was on infrastructure at the expense of consumption.

It was profound changes in the metropole's capitalism that brought about a major transformation in overseas operations. The demands of reconstruction in a Europe in ruins coincided, between 1947 and 1953, with the strategic conditions of the Cold War years. Africa became the source par excellence of raw materials and at the same time a possible fallback base and springboard for an eventual reconquest supported by the United States in case a "red invasion" of Western Europe succeeded. This role as a safe haven materialized, but for a different reason, with France's withdrawal from Indochina after the 1954 defeat, then the long war in Algeria, and the transfer to black Africa of capital formerly invested in the Far East.

Sub-Saharan Africa was the most favored locale for imperial planning, which was merely an extension of metropolitan innovations crystallized in 1946 in the Monnet Plan. The first Plan for Economic and Social Development in the Overseas Territories came between 1946 and 1952, the second between 1953 and 1957. The first, very ambitious, envisaged a radical modernization of the colonial economy through the reorganization and centralization of enterprises, mechanization of operations, and the creation of an advanced infrastructure: communications facilities and—a new phenomenon—energy (especially hydroelectric power).

The objective posited a substantial investment effort. The traditional colonial methods (forced labor, head tax, resort to borrowing) were insufficient and politically outmoded. The scope of the work was intended to provide also the indispensable social infrastructures: mid-level cadres, a better-qualified work force, and a higher level of training and diversified school and health capabilities.

It was therefore necessary to resort, on a massive scale, to capital importation. This was the role of the metropolitan public investments, coupled with direct encouragement of private investment. The required institutions were put in place in 1946: FIDES, the agency for financing overseas plans, furnished the credits; here again, this was a colonial counterpart to the metropole's FDES, ensuring, by a massive and gratis contribution in the form of gifts or long-term loans at low interest, the maximum profitability of productive investments. Budget processes became multiannual, so as to facilitate the execution of four-year plans. The whole was intended to replace the idea of *exploiting* colonies with the nascent idea of *aid* based on the export of public capital, thereby justifying the metropole's continued political tutelage.

Forty-five percent of FIDES funds remained, in principle, chargeable to the colonies;³ as they were quite incapable of furnishing the necessary credits, loan processes were strengthened and the Central Bank of Overseas France (CCFOM) was charged with carrying out all financial operations, notably to finance the territories' loans and to encourage the private sector.

In constant-value terms the French share for infrastructure reached its peak in 1951–1952. In terms of absolute value, French West Africa was the major magnet, but as it was still a domain of commercial economy tightly dependent upon shifting conditions, results were mixed.

The rate of growth of imports, in the order of 100 percent between 1949 and 1955, was outpaced by that of exports (115 percent, agricultural exports continuing to predominate); this meant that productive enterprise took priority over the infrastructure policy. Serious disappointments were encountered by grandiose projects, ill conceived or ill managed, which absorbed a substantial part of the aid only to end in failure, even bankruptcy. For example, the considerable costs of feasibility studies for dams not built (like Koukouré in Guinea) and especially (and this was not a purely French privilege) the agricultural mess beginning with salaried staff supervising a new black peasantry and supplied with modern equipment. The results produced by these mixed public agencies and private companies were limited, and the financial balance sheet unencouraging (such as the failure of experimental sectors in peanut growing at Kaffrine or of Sodaïca in Middle Casamance in Senegal).

But the prototype remains the exorbitant cost of the Niger Office: forty-four billion 1961 old French francs for forty-eight thousand hectares, or nearly a million francs per hectare (as compared with F100,000 per hectare elsewhere), and 56 percent of the credits for agricultural equipment for an expected production of three hundred thousand tons of cotton, but which in 1956 provided only one thousand tons. The second plan consequently pro-

3. Beginning in 1956, social investments (education, health, etc.) were financed 100 percent by France. This measure simply reinforced the "Cartiériste" current discussed below.

vided for modest undertakings, geographically more widely dispersed (rice plantations, water supply, etc.): in short, the progress of production was due more to the increase of the areas cultivated than to the modernization of methods.

Agricultural specialization was emphasized. It rested on a network of agencies and depots managed by large commercial companies that, in exchange for a single product traded intensively at a particular season (peanuts in Senegal, coffee or cocoa in the forest regions of Ivory Coast, cotton or peanuts in the Sahel), distributed a miscellaneous assortment of trade goods into the depths of the bush. This general decline in nonspecialized zones producing goods difficult and unprofitable to market (such as the local cotton, the kapok or Shea seeds of Upper Volta, or Dahomey's palm oil) brought about the retreat of French business from these ill-favored regions that had become unprofitable, to the benefit of African and Lebanese intermediaries. The process intensified the flow of immigration toward the large plantation zones and the urban centers—the only money-economy locales.

The most noticeable progress was in the field of *industrialization*, virtually nonexistent before 1940. In 1958, the percentage of industrial investments compared with total private investments made since 1946 rose in black Africa to 27.6 percent (as against only 13 percent of a much smaller total for the period 1900–1940). A single industry worthy of the name utilized a local product: the Senegalese oil presses processed nearly 50 percent of the crop on the eve of independence (against barely 3 percent in the 1930s); but the metropolitan quota system continued to confine exports to raw oil (the 1956 agreements limited to ten thousand tons the duty-free import of refined oil into the metropole). The other industries were mediocre, with a few cotton gins, a few sawmills (in the Ivory Coast), small palm-oil plants (all new), two cocoa-butter factories, five for fruit juice and canned pineapples, and a few fish-packing plants (established after 1954 in the Cape Verde peninsula). A bitter disappointment in the Ivory Coast was a paper-pulp factory that swallowed up five billion CFA francs.

Despite official reticence it was the import-substitution industries, almost exclusively in the ports, that on the whole developed the best—often associated with trading companies or with the participation of metropolitan industrial exporters: breweries (the first was opened in Dakar in 1938) and carbon-ated beverage bottling works, tobacco and match factories, textile mills (the first was the Bouaké in the Ivory Coast, at the time of the First World War), shoes (the Bata monopoly), and even, in 1958, a domestic-utensils workshop at Abidjan.⁴

4. The most recent synthesis is Jean Suret-Canale, *Afrique et capitaux*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1987). See also the same author's "From Colonization to Independence in French Tropical Africa: The

The newest was the appearance (still modest) of building-materials industries. A great debut was that of production of heavy materials required by the construction industry, previously imported from France in massive quantities: the Rufisque cement plant began operating in Senegal in the 1950s. But the stubborn opposition of French industrialists, the small size of the local market, and insufficient maintenance held production back.

The only great innovation took place in the field of energy with the construction of hydroelectric plants and later mining. The large operations, however, often of long germination, did not really bear fruit until after independence; the few enterprises completed in 1958–1960 were as yet of modest capacity and dubious profitability: this was true of calcium phosphate (abandoned in 1954) and Thiès alumina in Senegal, quarriable and near the railway, the bauxite on Guinea's Los Islands (of poor quality but easily shipped), or the iron ore at Kaloum, on the outskirts of Conakry, which needed only a fourteen-kilometer rail line from the mine to the port. On the eve of independence mining activity represented only 3 percent of the value of French West Africa's exports.

Nevertheless, a process of radical change was under way in the structure of capital being put to work. After World War II the Optorg company was added to the three other trading giants, Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO), Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain (SCOA), and Unilever. Above all, predominant financial groups arrived on the scene: The Banque de l'Union Parisienne controlled Optorg and most of the old Bordeaux firms; the Banque de l'Indochine had arrived after the 1930s' depression; after 1946 the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas and the Rothschild group expanded their footholds.

Parallel with the decolonization process, the best informed of the old colonial firms took the turning point: the model was SCOA's financial and industrial policy following the reversal of the tendency to assume, around the years 1950–1952, that the colonial "superprofits" until then derived from the traditional trade would inevitably come to an end.

Certainly between 1920 and 1960 the picture had been changed only by a few retouchings. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1950s it was profoundly transformed. Above all, the centralization of enterprise had come about, without the sketching out of a self-centered "national" market. On the contrary, the integration of the African economy with the metropolitan economy had found itself reinforced by the Franc Zone mechanism (the CFA franc,

Economic Background," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940–1960* (New Haven and London, 1982), pp. 445–82.

created in 1945, was thenceforth equivalent to two French francs) and by the organization of a protected market and prices; Franco-African exchanges always exceeded half, and often approached 70 percent, of the territories' external commerce (for comparison, in 1980 they fell to 25 percent for the Ivory Coast). But the conditions for an "opening" on the outside world, which had become inevitable upon independence, were now assembled.

THE INSTITUTIONAL TURNING POINT

Regarding the economic dimensions of decolonization, David Fieldhouse is quite right in insisting on the relative ease with which metropolitan circles accepted the process of economic decolonization in black Africa.⁵ It was elsewhere and earlier that great hostility toward any loosening of ties had been expressed (at the time of the Indochinese and Algerian wars). In black Africa colonial official circles, like the British, were aware of the escalation in the cost of aid and were soon confronted with the difficulty of mobilizing local potentialities, as well as the necessary work force, without calling upon the collaboration of the local political notables who aspired to take into their own hands the conduct of operations without breaking with the metropole.

Similarly, the large firms such as SCOA or CFAO observed a sort of prudent neutrality like that aroused in the Unilever case: from the moment social laws tended to align themselves with those of the metropole—and thus when local costs no longer enjoyed the advantages theretofore guaranteed by colonial privileges—the regime did not count for much. Furthermore, the "Car tiériste" current hostile to "social" colonialism developed from the beginning of the 1950s within specialized business milieux, in the form of a strong conservative current favoring decolonization in the name of the rationality of sound economic management. Thus we do not find any extreme position taken; only the tactics chosen differed, CFAO adopting a more wait-and-see attitude, striving to preserve a conservative type of operation as long as possible, while SCOA embarked at once on a "modernist" path of inter-African redeployment and diversification⁶

On the French side the institutional change of direction was negotiated gently. The striking thing was the overall political and economic conjunction on the national and international level, through the coincidence of two series of negotiations that were to end in both political and economic decolonization: the Defferre Law (the *Loi-Cadre* of June 1956) and the birth of the European Economic Community.

5. See chapter 5 below.

6. Cf. C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, "COA et CFAO dans l'Ouest africain, 1910–1965," *Journal of African History* 16, 4 (1975): 595–621.

Internally, the Defferre Law began to loosen the vise of colonial centralism. On the European level the Treaty of Rome (March 1957), after two years of negotiations, gave the signal for a certain emancipation of what remained of French Africa from the metropole's grip. For these two reasons we have here, beyond doubt, the true birthday of independence.

This said, the changes were slow, gradual, and, with few exceptions (as in the case of Guinea), without rupture from the preceding period: institutions, men, and channels of communication remained more or less the same, at least during the first decade.

1958–1972

This first period was still marked by French preponderance, which remained virtually unchallenged, although toward the end it began to seem more open to challenge.

At the institutional level adaptation was emphasized in the flexibility of acronyms, which remained almost unchanged: the CFA franc, formerly of “the French Colonies in Africa,” became that of “the Franco-African Community”; the Bank of West Africa (BAO), by virtue of a mere supplementary letter, now found itself BEAO (Bank of the West African States); the Central Bank, formerly of Overseas France (CCFOM), became that of the Economic Community, while the Investment Fund for Economic and Social Development (FIDES) changed into the Aid and Cooperation Fund (FAC).

There, in fact, lies the principal change: there was no longer any question of the former territories' funding the FAC; it became 100 percent the object of metropolitan subsidies; the idea of egalitarian, if not mutual, *cooperation* was thus to outpace that of *aid* and *assistance*.

It is true that at first the idea had difficulty in making headway. In spite of the principle of equality decreed between France and the Community, de Gaulle had announced in no uncertain terms in 1958—and applied with respect to Guinea—the idea that independence was incompatible with French assistance; now, in 1960, that was no longer the question: officially, aid had become cooperation. But a gap remained between the word and the facts. If, at the outset, the official evaluation report was severe but confident in this respect (the Jeanneney Report, published in 1963), ten years later the Gorse Report (1971) drew up such a severe balance sheet of the cooperation policy that the French government could not make up its mind to publish it. The tone had indeed sharply changed: de Gaulle had spoken of France's “great ambition”; President Pompidou settled for invoking his “duty.”

For the colonial heritage was a very heavy burden. At the institutional level, first, the cooperation agreements signed with one country after another

bilaterally and in contractual form merely took over the Community's ephemeral institutions. The Secretariat of State for Cooperation is the most visible symbol of this, since it was no more than the heir of the Special Service—itself inherited from the Ministry of Colonies—designed to administer the Community. It was thus an entity separate from the General Affairs Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (of External Relations after 1981) to which it was subordinated most of the time, save for two brief attempts at an entirely separate ministry (1960–1966, 1974–1981, and again since 1986). All the experiments undertaken thus far—including those by the socialist government since 1981) to reallocate responsibilities between the two ministries in order to reduce *geographical* specialization in favor of a *functional* allocation of authority have come up against this major inheritance.⁷ The difficulty is compounded in subtle ways by the presidential “private preserve” of African and Madagascan Affairs, also inherited from the Secretariat General for the Community, since the structured agency at first administered by the secretary general of the Community, Jacques Foccard, was replaced in 1981 by a small and informal team of advisers.

The same relationship existed with respect to an impressive series of Cooperation Agencies, most inherited from the colonial era,⁸ such as the institutes devoted to technical cooperation (Liaison Bureau for Technical Cooperation Agents—BLACT) or research (Office for Overseas Scientific and Technical Research—ORSTOM), and a whole string of specialized institutes: on forestry (Technical Center for Tropical Forestry—CTFT), tropical crops (French Institute for Coffee, Cocoa and other Stimulant Plants—IFCC), rubber (IRCA), cotton (IRCT), edible oils (IRHO), and so forth. Few indeed are those created only after independence and exhibiting the quite new will to correct the hyperspecialization of the colonial “division of labor;” among these is the Study and Research Group for the Development of Tropical Agronomy (GERDAT, 1971), which endeavored to combine and coordinate the agricultural research institutes, each specialized in a single product (more often than not a privileged and speculative export crop),⁹ in order to refocus the effort upon the country itself, not upon its relations with the exporter alone. In the

7. The reform attempted in 1982 by the Socialist government's first secretary of state for Cooperation, Jean-Pierre Cot, was to reserve technical affairs for Cooperation and political and cultural affairs for External Relations. This meant that the new distribution of functions (which, among other things, ran up against a plethora of “technical” participants in all fields, including—and even particularly—the cultural) did not proceed without clashes and contradictions.

8. R. Robarts, *French Development Assistance: A Study in Policy and Administration* (London, 1974) gives an extensive and detailed list.

9. If exception is made for IEMVT (stock-raising and veterinary medicine) and the recently founded IRAT (improvement of stock-raising and food-crop cultivation, particularly rice).

cultural field, finally, AUDECAM¹⁰ appeared as the French version of the inter-African organizations generated by the common use of French—from the Joint African, Madagascan and Mauritian Organization (OCAM), itself strongly supported by France (1966), to the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT, 1969).

The continuity of institutions marched hand in hand with continuity of personnel. In the first place this was because the institutions provided the opportunity to reintroduce specialized personnel: colonial administrators and technicians, most of them graduates of the *Ecole Coloniale*, agronomy technicians, doctors of tropical medicine, etc., trained in the schools as need arose, or in the field. These people had proliferated during the preceding phase of active colonization (1946–1956) and would otherwise have found themselves roughly torn from their field of activity. Their reintroduction was due both to the scarcity of African cadres at the moment of independence and to the brake brutally applied to the training of qualified native personnel by the closing of specialized schools in the metropole without rebuilding them promptly on the spot.

Thus it was not rare, even in the mid-1960s, to find oneself in the presence of a provincial city mayor (in the Ivory Coast, for example) who was as white as he was French; one technical adviser in the Gabonese Ministry of Interior at about the same time took particular pride in having completed construction of the North Road begun many long years before by his father—like himself, a former colonial administrator.

More dangerous for the economic autonomy of the states under consideration was the fact that virtually all of the first national development plans, drawn up in approximately 1961–1962, were prepared by French experts; most of the second plans, in the latter half of that decade, met the same fate. The first plans, particularly, in the direct line of colonial preoccupations, quite naturally placed the accent on operations organized as a function of the French market, beginning with an inventory of resources based on industrial priority much more than on the basic needs of the indigenous peoples.

We shall not speak of the tiny number of Africans in the private sector (one sign of the times: the first Senegalese president of the Dakar Chamber of Commerce was elected in 1969); but as late as 1975 the president of the Gabon chamber was a Frenchman, the local director of la Société du Haut-Ogooué-Bois (SHO-Bois), by far the richest forestry company, dating from the very beginning of the colonial era.¹¹

10. University Association for the Development of Teaching and Culture in Africa and Madagascar, created in 1964.

11. Cf. C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo [AEF] au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires*, 1898–1930 (Paris, 1972).

Nevertheless, after African nationalism’s “growing-up crisis” at the start of the 1970s, in speaking of French technical assistance one tended to accept the onus of neocolonialism; today, one is more likely to deplore the lack of intimate knowledge of an area in fact sui generis in many respects: modern technicians—thanks to the generation gap—have been detached from their colonial heritage, like their African partners and for the same reasons.

FRENCH COOPERATION’S “SECOND BREATH”: 1972–1974¹²

A certain coincidence is observable between this acceleration phase in the economic emancipation of French-speaking Africa and a reversal of the international situation; this permits us to account for the conjunction between the expressed will of the states and the existence of a deep mass movement.

African attacks against French neocolonialism proliferated, at times in violent form tinged with xenophobia (as in the Dakar student riots of 1969). The current was reinforced by the beginnings of an unemployment crisis arising from the postwar demographic boom—which has since continued to intensify, the average annual rate of population growth for the overall period being 3 percent for West Africa and 2 percent for Equatorial Africa.¹³

One of the first signs was the meeting at Dakar in 1968 of about twenty-six hundred representatives of small Senegalese businesses, who declared war on French neocolonialism: “The former metropolises’ nationals have not lost any of their privileges. The latter, on the contrary, have been reinforced by the free play of economic power,” complained their spokesman, Abdoulaye Diop (quoted by Corbett, 1972).

12. Cf. Carole Cosgrove Twitchett, *Europe and Africa: From Association to Partnership* (London, 1978), p. 195; I. William Zartman, “Europe and Africa: Decolonization or Dependency?” *Foreign Affairs* 54, 2 (Jan. 1976): 325–43.

13. *Population*

French-Speaking West Africa, including Togo
(millions of inhabitants)

1960	1965	1970	1975	1980
15.5	28.7	32.4	36.7	41.7

French-Speaking Equatorial Africa (plus Cameroon)

10.6*	11.6	12.8	14.0	15.6**
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*of which Cameroon: 4.8
**of which Cameroon: 7.9

Cf. U.N. World Population Statistics, 1, 1977.

Similarly, in 1969 a series of riots by unemployed persons in a suburb of Abidjan put Ivorian officialdom on alert: two years earlier, Houphouët-Boigny had calculated that only 10 percent of skilled posts could be occupied by Ivorians by 1970 (Corbett, 1972). He nevertheless organized a large-scale marathon of consultation with representatives of active sectors of the society. Already adumbrated the previous year by the founding of the Office for the Progress of Ivorian Enterprise (OPEI), a series of speeded-up measures was begun to Africanize employment. Thereafter, French cooperation did not diminish—on the contrary—but it did undergo a marked reorientation; Africanization was more or less accepted wherever it was becoming possible, notably in the lower jobs (primary education, then gradually secondary schools) and in administrative and judicial services, which attracted students en masse from the new university centers.

This vigorous xenophobic current was furthermore the work of a new generation of Africans: students, journalists, young civil servants—born after the Second World War, thus entering professional life after independence—who felt themselves much less indebted to colonial rule for their education than their elders and were much less imbued with French culture; their reaction was no longer “almost French,” but that of young nationalists.

Their activity converged with the “third world” spirit of a French Left in full intellectual explosion, whose severe and reasoned critiques proliferated (Ignacy Sachs, 1971; Tibor Mende, 1972), and whose unsparing reports Gorse’s own echoed.¹⁴ All this helped to prepare the conditions for a second breath for French cooperation.

Some French-speaking African states had profited from a remarkable leap forward: at the time the Ivorian “miracle” was often spoken of; at the end of this period of expansion they felt ready to demand, in the name of their sovereignty now in being, true economic emancipation. France was still in fact involved in nearly all fields; a privileged position was guaranteed her in the sphere of the vertical bilateral relations that were an obstacle to any broadened multilateralization of aid, as well as to horizontal collaboration among African states.

One after another, the French-speaking states were thus to demand relaxation of the privileged cooperation agreements.¹⁵ The first, negotiated in the

14. The reports by Jeanneney on *Cooperation Policy toward the Developing Countries* (1963) and Abelin on *French Cooperation Policy* (1975) have been published by La Documentation Française. The Gorse report (1971), on the other hand, has remained unpublished. The best analysis of it will be found in Robarts, *French Development Assistance*. All three are dealt with briefly but clearly in A. Bourgi, *La politique française de coopération en Afrique: le cas du Sénégal* (Paris, 1979), p. 373.

15. See, among other references, *La coopération entre la France et les états francophones d'Afrique noire et de l'océan indien* (Paris, 1972).

days of the Community and in principle in effect for five years, had been renewed automatically thereafter. Their revision was now demanded, first by Niger in 1972, then by the other states during 1973–1974; they were to lead to new agreements with Mauritania (1973), Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, and Senegal (1974), Benin (1975), Chad and Togo (1976), Niger (1977). The negotiations did not proceed without difficulty, as France was hardly disposed to relax her grip; she bargained by giving up privileges only in exchange for reduced financial aid (Mauritania and Madagascar, for example, had to give up automatic FAC financing by agreeing to case-by-case consideration of their requests). Unilateral ruptures were rare, save for the minor but symbolic nationalization by the Congo of the ORTF radio relay station at Brazzaville and, more serious, the imposition of exchange controls by Madagascar (which left the Franc Zone).

Generally speaking, France gave up little in the monetary, military, and cultural fields. At most, she made a few financial concessions: African participation in the Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO) was increased, and the states gained the right to keep in their own possession 20 percent of their reserves outside the Franc Zone, in order to facilitate their international economic relations. A few military bases were abandoned (such as Diego-Suarez in Madagascar), and a policy of arabization was allowed for Mauritania (where the university became bilingual). Finally, national participation was increased in deciding on the orientation of research within the specialized agronomic institutes and experimental stations (Senegal, Central African Republic). Most often, however, France succeeded in excluding specific economic and monetary issues from the agreements; these were henceforth to be negotiated one by one at the annual round-table meetings of the Franco-African commissions.

However modest, these concessions opened up new opportunities vis-à-vis non-French-speaking inter-African organizations. France herself for the first time seemed to join in, undertaking officially a policy of "redeployment," particularly in economic affairs (in Nigeria) or cultural (the creation of CREDU—Centre de Recherche et d'Etude de Documentation Universitaire—in Kenya, branching out into nine East and southern-African states). For that matter, the redeployment had already become accomplished fact for the private sector, whether for investment or international trade.

CENTRIFUGAL FORCES: EEC AND INTER-AFRICAN RELATIONS

From the beginning of the 1960s the strongly bilateral character of French influence tended to be counterbalanced by a growing multilateralization, thanks to the European Community. One can in fact interpret the process as

the creation of a more complex network of dependences woven by the North at the expense of the South; one of the effects was nevertheless to facilitate a certain disengagement vis-à-vis the former metropole.

The Treaty of Rome (1957) was at first truly a French initiative, hand in hand with the Defferre Law, resting on the conviction that a profound revision of colonial policy had to be foreseen.

Despite the hostility of Germany and the Netherlands, France gained the opening of the entire Common Market to the African colonial domains, most particularly those within the French Union; it is in fact because a viable European Community was unthinkable without France that she eventually won out, scarcely a month before the Rome agreement was signed (February 20–March 25, 1957).

The Republican Front government of the time (with Socialist participation) was well aware of the difficulty of assuming, by itself, the burden of “development assistance”: had the cost of the Indochina war not been twice as great as Marshall Plan aid to that territory? The French market was relatively saturated with tropical products (coffee, bananas, peanuts), and overseas prices were not competitive. The idea therefore was to make the six European powers share, insofar as possible, the burden but also the benefits of the colonial pact that only France and Belgium had until then enjoyed. Instead of a determination to decolonize, this was a political act whose objective was to benefit Europe by assuring it of a supplementary supply of raw materials—in this closing period of postwar penury—while the African colonies, thereby opened up to increased trade and investment, should content themselves with a few limited objectives.

In fact, the system was to constitute a flexible mechanism encouraging the evolution of tight colonial links toward a network of multilateral relations. The preamble affirms “the solidarity that binds Europe and the overseas countries” and the will of the member states “to ensure the development of their prosperity, in accord with the principles of the UN Charter.” The trail was thus blazed toward an African common market, resting on three cardinal points: the progressive opening of the “associated” African countries’ markets to the exports of all the member states, without discrimination; the opening of the EEC’s markets to the products of the associated states under a special preferential regime; and the establishment of an economic and social investment program in the overseas countries.

At first the gains were more theoretical than real; the opening up of all Europe was slow, but diversification of markets had become *possible*. The pace of tariff reduction was more rapid than the treaty foresaw: at the end of 1962 duties levied on agricultural products imported from the associated countries had fallen by between 30 and 35 percent, on industrial goods by 50

percent; quotas, with some exceptions, were eliminated. In the other direction, the dismantling of discriminatory tariffs in Overseas France accelerated, as the associated states were required to open themselves to the Six on an equal basis within the framework of a general preferential regime granted the EEC with respect to the rest of the world.

The trade of the French-speaking colonies in Africa with France then began to rise more slowly than with the other EEC partners (up 18 percent per year between 1958 and 1963). But the metropole’s role remained predominant; even though the EEC as a whole absorbed more than 75 percent of the associated countries’ exports, its trade with non-associated states grew much faster than with the associated states (75 percent as against 8 percent).

The opening also implied establishment rights overseas for non-French firms and individuals by reason of the assurance to the Six of equal treatment of their nationals: businesses, mining companies, and liberal professions could diversify and enjoy local advantages such as eligibility for membership in chambers of commerce. Of course, French firms, well entrenched on the spot, continued to carve out the lion’s share for themselves; they were awarded 60 percent of supply contracts (as against 20 percent to the Federal Republic of Germany) and 75 percent of public works contracts (against 13 percent for the Italians) tendered by the EEC. At the outset the European Fund for Overseas Development (FEDOM) appeared above all to be an extension of French financial and colonial institutions: nearly all of the financing (\$581 million, of which only \$200 million was furnished by France, on a par with the Federal Republic of Germany) was for the benefit of the French territories (88 percent). The “thinking head” of the organization was predominantly French, beginning with the commissioner general in charge of conducting relations with the associated countries (Robert Lemaigen, ex-president of French West Africa’s Société Commerciale des Ports 1941–1958) and the major part of his team.

Aid from FEDOM nevertheless remained limited: 20 percent of the total aid for the period 1958–1962, at a time when annual French public aid to the fourteen African states and Madagascar had risen to nearly \$300 million a year from an annual average of \$210 million between 1946 and 1957.¹⁶ Furthermore, the agency was very slow in getting organized and became operational

16. French public aid to the fourteen African states and Madagascar (millions of dollars):

1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
280	276	288	294	277	255	241	270	268	272

Edward M. Corbett, *The French Presence in Black Africa* (Washington, D.C., 1972), p. 105.

only in the spring of 1959; at the end of 1962 just \$72 million had been disbursed, although nearly three hundred projects were under way. Before 1960 France, for her part, did not recognize the legitimacy of contacts with Brussels that did not go through Paris. Even so, the price paid by the metropole, even before independence, was to withdraw from the "colonial pact" by opening up the African territories, by right, to non-French investment. One result was the promotion of better inter-African connections, the FED showing itself receptive to carrying out expensive works not immediately profitable but in the long run enhancing the infrastructure (for example, road connections between Togo and Dahomey; the trans-Cameroon railway; SODEPALM's rural modernization in the Ivory Coast).

The entry of the associated states into the EEC had been negotiated by the metropolises; but at the beginning of the 1960s no one, including the new states—who merely confirmed their adherence to the obligations the metropolises had assumed in their name—questioned the fact that privileged multi-lateral relations had been established.

For the African states, on the contrary, the objective was to renegotiate advantages at least equal to those guaranteed by the Treaty of Rome; for them it was a question of obtaining EEC aid in transforming their economies, particularly in the field of industry. Yet the commercial gains were counterbalanced by the withdrawal of the French protective umbrella (\$325 million between 1957 and 1962) demanded by the European partners, in return for help in improving methods of production that were to make African prices competitive by about 1970! Until then France had artificially supported the price of raw materials exported by her territories, but between Yaoundé I and Yaoundé II producers were gradually forced to align themselves with world rates. The result had effects that were sometimes catastrophic, notably for Senegalese peanuts, the collapse of whose price disrupted the national economy and discouraged the growers.¹⁷

The African states sought to negotiate on the basis of parity and equality among representatives, and to obtain a program to stabilize prices of export products. But Europe, now reconstructed and confident that its self-sufficiency was ensured, was hardly willing to grant new advantages. Europe accepted only preferential tariffs and was unwilling to cut itself off from American and Asian markets; the only noticeable innovation in Yaoundé II was an emergency reserve fund of \$80 million in case of collapse of world prices for tropical products or natural disaster—which merely picked up where the "production aid" of Yaoundé I left off.

17. With Yaoundé II, price supports were maintained only for bananas (which still enjoy a preferential French price) and cotton (to compensate for the high cost of freight). French price supports between 1957 and 1962 were equivalent to a subsidy of \$325 million.

As for FED (FED-I), apparently 25 percent above FEDOM (\$730 million), it was in reality lower if deduction is made for the termination of the French price-support system. It was above all marked by French planned-economy principles, which demanded that aid be incorporated in a plan for which the FED furnished the technical assistance; it was, moreover, now preoccupied more with product diversification than with infrastructure.

LOMÉ I, II, AND III (1975, 1980, 1985)

The Lomé accords marked the major turning point in European policy: from 18 states (17 of them French-speaking) the membership rose to 46 (of which 21 were members of the Commonwealth) and then to 52. The concern was now not simply with Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific (ACP) but with the whole body of cooperative relations with the "Third World" countries "in a spirit of international solidarity." Thenceforth the problem greatly transcends simply the French case. The ACP group gained access to the EEC for 96 percent of their products while retaining a certain right of protection binding them only to nondiscriminatory, most-favored-nation treatment; it had, in fact, now been understood that strict reciprocity between North and South leads to inequality in practice. The creation of STABEX in 1975 ensured a certain regularization of prices, particularly of agricultural products, but also of iron, within the limits of available credits (in 1980, \$138 reimbursable out of a total of \$261 million. Then, in 1980, the creation of SYSMIN, intended in principle to play a similar role for mineral products, gave a first bit of reality to the "New International Economic Order" demanded since the U.N. economic development conference of 1974 by the entire body of developing countries.

France has lost her prerogatives vis-à-vis the African partners: she no longer wields the essence of political power, and though her economic role is still preponderant within the French-speaking framework, it seems much diminished in relative value. The French-speaking African states, by virtue of their economic characteristics, have joined the cohort of "third world"—and especially that of the "fourth world": the disinherited states for the most part lacking minerals or oil.

THE RESULTS

France has, however, erected an apparently solid and effective apparatus against the international centrifugal forces. To maintain herself in place she has two weapons that she continues to use to the full: currency and language.

The contemporary origins of the Franco-African zone are of course to be found in recent colonial history; the CFA franc (worth twice the old French

franc) was created just after World War II when exchanges were reestablished, to compensate for the disparity between import prices in the territories (which had followed inflation in the metropole) and export prices of raw materials, which had remained more or less at the prewar level; the aim was to restore a certain equilibrium, to the benefit of colonial import-export firms.

Upon independence, the continuity of commerce was marked by the maintenance of a currency with the same value and exchange rate of the French franc and with unrestricted convertability, circulation, and transfer. The states' monetary dependence was absolute. The two banks of issue, the Central Bank of the West African States (for former French West Africa and Togo) and the Central Bank of Equatorial Africa and Cameroon were, in fact, branches of the Bank of France; one-third of the members of the former's board of directors and one-half of the latter's were French (and a majority of two-thirds was required for important decisions). The ruling organism, the Franc Zone Monetary Committee, was an emanation of the Bank of France, presided over by its governor and largely composed of representatives of the various French ministries (Finance, Cooperation, and so forth), the African currency issue institutes, and credit establishments operating in the Franc Zone. Its seat remained in Paris until the early 1970s.

Above all, the African central banks placed their reserves in French francs in a deposit account with the French treasury, and their foreign-currency holdings were centralized in Paris. The Bank of France guaranteed their assets but forbade them any deficit: the states could use its services only to the extent of their resources (hence the budget-balancing subsidies granted by France).

It was just after the war, a period of balance-of-payments difficulty and monetary instability, that the Franc Zone was important for France: as all reserves were in France's keeping, the member states' foreign currency was profitable to the metropole since all their foreign transactions were channeled through the Paris market. Furthermore, France's control of local credit policies was tight, thanks to her virtual majority representation in the central banks. But the advantage for the states concerned was also real: some of them, like Chad, the Central African Republic or Burkina Faso, were properly speaking French creations and could not survive without the metropole's aid; for their currency, the Franc Zone was the sole possible guarantee.

The revised cooperation agreements granted some freedoms that were more apparent than real: African participation in the BAO was increased; in particular, reserve regulations were somewhat relaxed, and in addition to the right of foreign convertability obtained when they were opened to the EEC, the members were now able to keep in their own hands 20 percent of their reserves outside the Franc Zone, which freed their international trade from

French control a little, notably with their English-speaking neighbors (Niger/Benin/Senegal with Ghana/Nigeria/Gambia). Yet the grip remained, at least on the political level; only Guinea (after 1961), Mali (between 1962 and 1967, though almost at the cost of bankruptcy), Madagascar and Mauritania (since 1973) left the Franc Zone.

The fact is that today the institution is changing course: instead of serving as an instrument of French domination, it is becoming a supplementary tool of aid to third world countries, to the extent that French financial advantages diminish. It is true that the internal balance of payments between France and French-speaking Africa remains definitely to France's advantage though official figures are painfully lacking—for there is no overall balance of payments within the Franc Zone, and financial transfers between France and the African monetary zones leave no trace. But the commercial balance is more and more comfortably favorable to France and—except where tourism and migrant labor are concerned—the bulk of invisible transfers goes from Africa to France (insurance, transportation costs, savings of the many Frenchmen working in the French-speaking economy who remit a large proportion of their high salaries to the metropole while supplying themselves on concessionary terms with imports of French origin).

For the first time, nevertheless, the balance of the external assets of the two groupings (West and Equatorial Africa), and notably their foreign-exchange reserves, has moved to the debit side: in Equatorial Africa the deficit appeared in 1977 by reason of financial disorders in Gabon, but the restoration of order by financial tutelage, and resumption of Congolese petroleum production, brought equilibrium back, at least momentarily, in 1980. But in the West African Monetary Union—the BCEAO zone—it was in 1979 that the balance turned negative, and the situation is deteriorating year by year (−24.5 billion CFA francs in 1974; −281.1 in 1980; −528.8 in 1982). As previously for the surpluses, the responsibility falls for the most part on the Ivory Coast, afflicted by the fall of prices and excessive indebtedness. Hence aid on the part of France in the form of budget support that more than doubled between 1977 and 1978.¹⁸ But more particularly, France is reacting like the others: by applying the theses of the Abelin Report (1975), bilateral aid has retreated in favor of multilateral aid, loans approved by the Central Bank have had their conditions stiffened, and those granted on market conditions since 1975 have rapidly become more numerous. Even though since 1978 some restoration of former methods has occurred in the form of emergency help in facing up to the grave intensification of the recession, one may again observe

18. Whereas it had decreased by 58 percent over the five preceding years: *Marchés tropicaux* 1953 (15 April 1983), p. 977; *La zone franc en 1970*, p. 182; and, generally, *Rapports annuels du comité monétaire de la zone franc*. Cf. Suret-Canale, *Afrique et capitaux*, p. 84.

how closely France's attitude toward her former privileged domain is coming to the general configuration of north-south relations.¹⁹

FRENCH LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND TECHNICAL AID

It is well known that French technical assistance, in money figures, is the largest in Africa. In the former colonial territories the number of French participants has remained remarkably stable over the entire period: about 10,000 in 1960, more than 11,000 in 1972 (plus 2,000 university instructors and agricultural technicians not employed by the cooperation services), and today still number more than 10,000 persons—or a fourth of all the French technical cooperation personnel abroad—plus 4,000 Frenchmen working for various development agencies in black Africa.

What has changed, however, is the composition and assignment of this personnel. At first the participants were mostly administrative or political agents or technicians—often, as we have seen, former colonial officials. In 1960 teachers represented hardly more than 25 percent of the total, but their percentage continued to grow: already in 1969 they constituted 45 percent of the total, 62 percent in 1971, 65 percent in 1974, 68 percent in 1975, and nearly 72 percent in 1977. As of 1968 education absorbed a little more than half of public aid development credits, and its share rapidly reached two-thirds (Gorse Report). The very high cost of technical personnel weighed increasingly from year to year on the expenses of the Ministry of Cooperation (+11.5 percent in 1975; +20 percent in 1976; +27.7 percent in 1978);²⁰ that is the chief reason for which, quite recently, a “slimming down” was begun, not without raising some serious problems of repatriation to the metropole.

The consequences of this policy have been many, on the political level as well as the economic, particularly as there is a clear coincidence between financial and technical aid: the four most-favored countries (aside from Madagascar, also well provided for) are the Ivory Coast, Senegal, Cameroon, and Gabon, where more than half of the teachers were on the job at the beginning of the 1970s, at a time when France furnished virtually all the personnel in higher education and more than half the personnel in secondary education (from 87 percent for “long” secondary education in Senegal to 25 percent, as a minimum figure, for “short” secondary education in Benin).

The advantage for France is obviously cultural hegemony as the guarantee of maintaining her power in all fields. Of course, Africanization of cadres in public service and business accelerated after 1970, but even if they have become numerically a minority, key positions as financial and economic ex-

19. Cf. Suret-Canale, *Afrique et capitaux*, pp. 78–79.

20. Cf. Roberts, *French Development Assistance*.

perts are still entrusted to Frenchmen. It was they who drew up, at the time of the national plans, an economic model of industrialization French-style (or, more generally, Western-style) more concerned with developing natural potentialities (based on the geological and hydrological inventory) than with exploring questions of means in the form of manpower, attitudes, and potentialities of a sociological and historical order: it is known that the failure of a number of those vast infrastructural projects, industrial and especially agricultural, is attributable to this hypertechicism. Reliance on foreigners is not, certainly, in itself bad, and in the absence of qualified nationals it was difficult to proceed otherwise. But the result is a *de facto* dependence where criteria of judgment and choice are concerned that have long appeared, and still appear, ill suited to the national realities. This brings with it both the xenophobic passion of the Africans and a withdrawal into the self on the part of the technicians, many of whom, misunderstood and ill placed, react with the reflexes of a contemptuous neocolonialism.

The phenomenon is not peculiar to the French-speaking zone, but it is longer lasting. In the early 1970s the People's Republic of Congo still appointed a majority of Frenchmen (six out of ten members) to the commission responsible for improving municipal administration—which ran the risk of serious consequences in this “socialist” country with an already clear urban majority. French principles of justice prevail, all the more since French lawyers, under provisions of the cooperation agreements, may practice without restraint in the African courts of justice; in 1970 they were only six out of eighteen in Abidjan, but in Dakar they exceeded half the total; elsewhere the proportion was commonly three to one; sometimes there was not a single African. Generally speaking, French citizens continue to enjoy a relatively privileged status (for example, exemption from visa requirements).

Finally, the education of the first generation of African notables and chiefs of state was almost totally French; in each country the habit arose of almost daily contact with the ambassador of France, who was *ex officio* dean of the diplomatic corps. By his side, the chief of the aid and cooperation mission played an equally important role as adviser, technician, and even project initiator, since it was he who drew up the aid programs and supervised their execution. In short, French culture predominated, encouraging among other things economic training circuits (such as tours of duty in large French banks and businesses) and the preservation of supply and market patterns.

We have seen that a reaction in favor of Africanization made itself felt at the start of the 1970s. It corresponded to the emergence of native middle classes and bourgeoisie (notably in the Ivory Coast, Senegal and Gabon), responding in large part to the aspirations of a second generation: on the one hand, the new managers (among whom soldiers and technicians predominated) are less

preoccupied with thinking in pro-French or anti-French terms and more concerned with concrete economic and/or political problems within progressively nationalized systems. On the other hand, young intellectuals born at the time of independence are better integrated into their environment and sensitized to the obvious inadaptability of imported methods of education. Their criteria echo the severity of the French reports that emphasized not only the high cost of technical assistance but also its limited effectiveness; the scholastic results are mediocre: half the primary school students drop out or repeat years; the percentage who go on to the secondary level is very low. The insufficiency of technical education makes for structural underemployment, oriented for the most part toward the third sector and public administration at the expense, notably, of the rural sector, as success in primary school means a loss for the rural society—and hence for agricultural development.

The French heritage seems to weigh heavily: pedagogical innovations were minimal in a cooperation aimed at “substitution” rather than “training” (Gorse Report); no effort has been made (or at least none carried through) in the local language; the aid personnel’s lack of qualifications has long been dwelt on (since 1963–1964 increasing recourse has had to be made to “progress volunteer” recruits and, particularly since 1972, to “National Service Volunteers” (VSN) who agree to “leave on cooperation” as an alternative to military service, as instructors, technicians, or young doctors). Unsuitability was particularly typical in the universities which, until the renegotiation of the cooperation agreements, appeared to be a direct dependency of France, which paid their personnel: whence a crushing disparity in salary in favor of a few nationals thus privileged, and the high cost of a debatable issue, since the diplomas granted were still French or assimilated-French—based, that is, on programs patterned after those of France.

Things are definitely changing; today, primary instruction has been almost totally Africanized (which, moreover, translates as an accelerating fall in quality) but is still delivered, with some exceptions, in the French language. Nevertheless, the cult of the diploma persists, and African civil servants, still shaped in the French mould, ensure the perpetuation of structures copied from the metropole in which they still feel at ease. The quite recent policy of cultural “disengagement” adopted by the French cooperating partner mainly for financial reasons—whether it involves personnel paid by France or partly reimbursed by the host country now unable to pay the cost (like the Ivory Coast)—is probably not yet ready to reduce the enormous gap existing between the acculturated elite and the rest of the population. For it is at this level that the French cultural weight rests; on the economic level, strictly speaking, the influence is much more diffuse: an unmistakable sign is the very great weakness of French cooperation in the specifically industrial field.

THE FRENCH WITHDRAWAL

Despite the institutional and technical means put to work by France, the redeployment of interests and relations today seems irreversible. On the one hand, the former metropole is carrying it forward vigorously: French-speaking Africa, appearances notwithstanding, now represents only a very minor part of her international economic activity; on the other hand, the Africans have used, so far as possible, all the available opportunities to diversify their partners, their markets, and above all their sources of finance. Thus, however unique their recent past may have been, the situation of the French-speaking states in Africa hardly seems fundamentally different in kind from that of other African regions.

We know that the overall economic situation of the French-speaking African states appears particularly bad. Except for the Congo (doubtless temporarily and in a relatively minor way), none can compensate for the prevailing poverty with a flood of currency deriving from petroleum (like Nigeria or Libya). For a decade many have suffered from a deplorable combination of climatic circumstances, located as they are in the Sahel zone sorely afflicted by drought. Several of them have undergone a substantial fall of productivity and disruptions of output attributable to the difficulties of Marxist-Leninist regimes more or less plastered over a rural reality unsuitable for them (the Congo, Benin, Burkina). The Central African Republic has experienced a detestable and destructive political regime; Chad, prey of international strategic rivalries, survives only in war, and the state's power has given way to a succession of struggles among rival factions from which, at the moment, there appears no escape. And the Ivory Coast, the only country where in the 1970s a relative agricultural diversification in a euphoric context of prices for tropical products seemed to ensure a certain affluence, is now collapsing, along with the price of coffee and cocoa, under the weight of its debts.

Can one therefore attribute this catastrophic situation to specific features of the recent past, to a French heritage different from that of the English- and Portuguese-speaking zones? Is the fate of Niger, suffering from the fall of uranium prices, so different from that of Zambia, enduring the collapse of copper prices? Is the fate of Senegal, which has virtually nothing to export but worthless peanuts, so different from Kenya's, neither country succeeding better than the other in making use of a reasonably substantial industrial potential? Finally (and leaving aside the case of Guinea, whose recent history is indeed special), are the "socialist" wobblings of Benin fundamentally so different from those of Tanzania, when neither country has had much success in rising from a typically rural poverty?

Put another way, would the present level of underdevelopment of the zone

be of a different order if the French presence had been exerted in another fashion? Probably not: it appears, when all is said and done, that the outcome of these past twenty years is not different from what has happened elsewhere. The specific forms of the transfer of power have hardly modified in any fundamental way the unfolding of economic processes in French-speaking Africa.

Why? Doubtless for two reasons: one the one hand, because in the economic domain properly speaking the weight of French exclusivism has been more apparent than real; on the other, and more importantly, because French interests in Africa, under the pressure of international rivalries and/or within the framework of increasing similarity of interests among members of the European Community, did not operate otherwise than the interests of any other origin would have in the same context, France retaining of its colonial heritage only a certain number of acquired advantages (firms, markets) that the institutions established permitted her to protect from sometimes formidable competition. That is the reason why the comments of David Fieldhouse on the external and internal causes of Africa's economic aberrations (effects of economic dependency and misdeeds of the state economic bureaucracy) apply just as well to French-speaking Africa as to English-speaking Africa: French or not, domination of the South by the North would have expressed itself in more or less the same way and in the same channels, and it would have exploited the same collusion of national governments reflecting the interests of factions (rather than classes), which would probably have led to the same mistakes.

We shall go no further here than to show that France's disengagement has

TABLE 1
Foreign Commerce of Former Colonial French-Speaking Africa¹ (Billions of current French francs)

Year	Exports		Imports		Percentages	
	To France ²	Total ³	From France ²	Total ³	To France (Exports)	From France (Imports)
1959	1.8	2.6	1.5	2.96	70	50
1960	2.1	2.7	1.6	3.2	78(60?) ⁴	50(65?) ⁴
1965	2.3	4.4	2.3	4.8	52	48
1970	3.2	7.4	3.5	8.5	43	41
1975	5.7	14.9	8.0	18.8	34	43
1978	8.9	27.8	12.6	31.0	32	40.6

1. For all former colonial or mandated territories, excluding Madagascar.
2. French statistics.
3. Mitchell historical annual, plus U.N. statistics for Guinea and Mauritania.
4. See "La zone franc in 1964," cited by J. Suret-Canale, *Afrique et capitaux*, 1987.

TABLE 2
French Commerce with French-Speaking Africa
(Percentages)

Year	Imports into France	Exports from France
1959	10	8
1960	9	7
1965	4	5
1970	3	4
1975	2	4
1978	2	4
1980	2	4

been much more rapid in the *economic* field than it seems to have been in the institutional and political fields.

By 1965 France’s commercial disengagement was practically an accomplished fact. In 1959 French-speaking Africa accounted for 10 percent of French imports and 8 percent of exports. The percentage had fallen by 1965 to 4 percent and 5 percent and since the early 1970s has been remarkably stable at a very low level (2 percent and 4 percent, respectively). In other words, France no longer has an obvious commercial interest in her former African domain; she no longer obtains her raw materials there and, in the other direction, French-speaking Africa represents for her a quite secondary market.

Certainly, the Franc Zone has remained far more dependent upon France; but there also the percentages have diminished (see Tables 1 and 2).

It is very difficult to find detailed aggregate figures; the various collections of statistics do not agree. nor do the recent studies.²¹ Nevertheless, it does seem that here, too, the turning point was reached quite soon: the percentages more or less reached their “cruising speed” even before the 1970s and the onset of the global recession.

France remains, in a remarkably stable fashion, the states’ largest source of supply, doubtless because, on the one hand, of the antiquity and permanence of the colonial networks and, on the other hand, diversification took place at

21. For example, there are enormous discrepancies—particularly from the 1970s on—between the figures cited (in millions of CFA francs) in B. R. Mitchell’s *International Historical Statistics: Africa and Asia* (New York, 1982) and the U.N.’s *African Statistical Yearbook*, vol. 2, (New York, 1976), in millions of dollars. Neither one coincides with the *Rapports annuels du comité monétaire de la zone franc*, nor with the recent thesis of Brigitte Nouaille-Degorce, “La politique française de coopération avec les états africains et malgache au sud du Sahara, 1958–1978,” Thèse d’Etat, Université de Bordeaux-I, 1980.

TABLE 3
Aid and Public and Private Investments
Franc Zone (Percentages)

1961	86.75
1965	69.58
1978	54.75
1980	64.22

Source: Reports of the Franc Zone Monetary Committee, 1960–1981.

the exports level, mostly in favor of other EEC partners: nearly three-quarters of African products went to the metropole at the close of the colonial era, but only half by 1965 and barely more than one-third since the beginning of the 1970s—after which the movement seems to have encountered a barrier, doubtless accentuated by the recession.

The early fall, and later the stability, of France's role in the investment field is perhaps even more revealing: French public aid to the fourteen African and Madagascan states has, it is true, remained remarkably stable for the past forty years (with an average of \$210 billion from 1946 to 1957 and \$272 billion from 1960 to 1969, a figure probably maintained approximately since then).²² But this stability, considered by France as a guarantee of influence and political stability, constitutes a maximum that France does not intend, and moreover is hardly able to exceed; following the opening up of the regions under the Treaty of Rome the French share of investments decreased in relative value, but here again "cruising speed" seems to have been reached quite soon, by the mid-1960s: from 87 percent in 1961, the French share fell to 69 percent in 1965, but still amounted to 64 percent in 1980 (see Table 3).

In other words, France's position in investment is still preponderant, but it found itself breached by a competing capitalism of international dimensions whose methods France now uses—methods that have little in common with the late colonial capitalism; it is now that conglomerate which—in spite of glaring shortcomings in infrastructure and frequently disappointing indus-

22. Except between 1962 and 1966 (when the official idea was to reduce the relative size of cooperative aid, whence a net decline in constant value during this period), the level of assistance has remained remarkably stable. The net disbursements of public bilateral French aid to the eighteen African countries under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Cooperation nevertheless again showed a tendency to diminish in relative value between 1973 and 1978 (by comparison with the PNB and aid to DOM-TOM), as well as in real value, even though overall aid (adding the French contribution to multilateral aid) remained at about the same level in real value. See Suret-Canale, *Afrique et capitaux*, p. 104, citing *Panorama de l'action du Ministère de la Coopération, Etudes et documents* 38 (February 1980): 160. See also *L'évolution récente des rapports publics de la France à 18 états d'Afrique et de l'océan indien* (Paris, 1979).

trialization—has permitted these territories to accumulate a productive capacity admittedly costly, not very profitable, and often uncompetitive, but which cannot be compared with the few achievements realized by the end of the 1950s referred to at the beginning of this article.

From this point of view the transfer of power has now been effected, if not from the former metropole to the independent states, at least from an exclusive colonial system to that of an internationalization of dependency relationships between developed nations and the third world, implying, within the new African states, an acceleration in social differentiation based on an accumulation of capital heterogeneous but real, on the emergence of a bourgeoisie of civil servants and also of entrepreneurs, on hypertrophy of the cities, on the eruption of the so-called informal sector: phenomena now operating at full speed throughout the African continent, the analysis of which would require a whole book.

At any rate, a transfer of power has taken place, from the decision-making agencies of the former metropole to the group dominating the newly independent states—factions, rather than a class, in most cases: an aggregate, that is, of complex interests arising from kinship networks, ethno-tribalist manipulations, and religious admixtures, as well as from the interests of an exploiting “class” in the capitalist sense of the word.

This said, what real autonomy of economic decision do these young states enjoy? The answer is to be found not in the consequences and implications of the transfer of power but in its origins. Here history asserts all its rights, for it is not by accident that state power in contemporary Africa has assumed specific forms more or less characterized by autocratic economic management (regardless of the political ideology chosen), one-party rule, hypertrophied bureaucracy, and clientelism—the whole bringing with it decisions and practices that seem to defy any good economic sense. It would be a gross exaggeration of the data to place blame for the current economic errors essentially on the states’ internal political choices: one may well ask whether, properly speaking, these states have had, and still have, a choice.

The contemporary forms and choices of state power today are the consequence of two series of factors, analytically external and internal. At the external level, the independent states have been, and remain, heirs of the colonial state in law and in fact. For this reason, the transfer of power left no room for choice. In the first place, in the absence of a constituted nation, the state could articulate its desiderata only by compulsive methods; the colonial economy had been a controlled, coercive economy. Quite naturally, the post-colonial economy, introduced into the same networks by the same agencies, acted in the same way. The French case served as the exemplar: the model and the heritage could not be evaded. This is why the alternative, imagined by

Fieldhouse,²³ of a real choice, upon independence, between an agrarian option—which was deliberately rejected—and a policy of industrialization embodying the international consensus of experts, is simply a figment of the mind: there was no alternative, but a course already determined.

The internal factors exist, too, of course. But here also, how are the present rulers “responsible”? The contrast between a rural society bogged down by the survival of a “peasant mode of production,” typified by stagnation of output and the stubborn persistence of ideological and social brakes, and the model of a “modern” economy, centralized and managed, does not date from independence.²⁴ The gap appeared in the colonial era and widened throughout the period. An authoritarian political decision is not enough to fill it, particularly if the whole set of mechanisms handed over remains the same. Here again, the independent governments did not have the means of a radical change in orientation at the outset and certainly have not acquired them since.

That is why the immediate impact of French-style institutions on this common core of history, applicable to the whole body of African countries, has on balance exerted only a secondary influence, powerless to modify the general orientation of the processes by which the transfer of power is made.

23. See chapter 5 below.

24. Cf. G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry* (London, 1980), p. 270.

5. *Arrested Development in Anglophone Black Africa?*

DAVID FIELDHOUSE

There are two basic questions that have to be asked about the role of economic factors in African history between the mid-1940s and the late 1970s. First, why did the metropolitan states transfer political power, despite their very considerable economic stake in African territories? Second, why did political independence not lead to that economic autonomy and sustained development which was confidently predicted by many development economists and nationalists in the 1950s and 1960s? Neither question can now be answered with any confidence, since the primary official sources are not yet open for research and insufficient work has been done on economic development during the last two decades. But the issues are so important that they demand assessment. The aim of this essay is, therefore, to identify some of the major questions and to indicate in which direction the available evidence is pointing.*

THE ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF DECOLONIZATION

It has long been a problem for those who hold that the colonial empires were a successful device by which advanced capitalism in the West could extract wealth from the dependencies to explain why these milk cows should have been set loose. The problem was not peculiar to the mid-twentieth century. As Adam Smith stated bluntly in 1776: "To propose that Great Britain should voluntarily give up all authority over her colonies . . . would be to propose

*This chapter summarizes the argument of my *Black Africa, 1945-1980* (London, 1986). It cannot provide all the evidence on which the argument is based.

such a measure as never was, and never will be adopted, by any nation in the world.”¹

For nearly two centuries his prediction proved correct: the only colonies any European state relinquished permanently before 1947 were lost as the result of successful rebellion or international war and diplomacy. A comparable problem, however, was posed by the end of the slave trade and the emancipation of slaves by Britain between 1807 and 1834; and the way this has been treated provides an interesting rehearsal of arguments later used to explain the apparently inexplicable benevolence of the capitalist states in liberating Africa.

In each of these cases the official rhetoric originally stressed the benevolence of the liberating state. In the case of slavery the conventional account was that an altruistic Britain destroyed the economic foundations of her most valuable overseas possessions simply to clear her conscience. It was only with the publication of Eric Williams’s *Capitalism and Slavery*² that an explanation compatible with the assumption that capitalist states act only in self-interest became widely accepted. Williams argued that Britain ended the slave trade and subsequently slavery only when and because the sugar industry had ceased to be critical for her own economy. This ingenious and initially persuasive proposition, though much criticized by specialists on the slave trade,³ led naturally to a still more ingenious proposition. Britain ended the slave trade when it became less profitable to transport African labor overseas than to use the same labor in its homelands to serve the great new commodity trades of the nineteenth century—vegetable oils and other West African products.⁴

Right or wrong, this revisionist approach provides a key to the standard radical explanation of European decolonization after 1945. Europe transferred political power when it no longer needed to govern the colonies in order to ensure opportunity and security for metropolitan capital there.⁵

The common argument, in brief, is as follows. Historically the main func-

1. *Wealth of Nations* (1776; London, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 112–13.

2. Chapel Hill, 1944.

3. For example, Roger Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave: Trade and British Abolition, 1760–1810* (London, 1975).

4. For example, see E. Sik, *The History of Black Africa* (Budapest, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 191–94. I am not sure where Sik got this idea, possibly from standard Marxist-Leninist doctrine. See also Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London, 1972).

5. P. A. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York, 1957); G. Arrighi and J. Saul, *The Political Economy of Africa* (New York, 1968); H. Bernstein, ed., *Underdevelopment and Development* (Harmondsworth, 1973); P. Gutkind and I. Wallerstein, eds., *The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa* (London, 1976); G. Kay, *Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis* (London, 1975); C. Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya* (London, 1975).

tion of colonialism was to restructure the economies of the so-called third-world countries so that they would fit into their allotted slots in the newly emergent world system. This process had three main aspects. First, types of production had to be molded so that the colonies produced commodities needed by the capitalist states (mostly raw materials and foodstuffs) and ceased to produce those manufactures that the metropolitan countries wished to sell to them. Second, modes of production had to be articulated with capitalist methods; for example, compulsory growing of cotton, groundnuts, palm oil, and so forth by peasants had to be organized so as to fit with capitalist processing and export. Third, colonialism meant the creation of physical, political, and juridical structures that were well adapted to the needs of foreign capital; that is, so that capitalism could operate as efficiently in Africa as it could in Europe or North America.

Applying this scheme to the chronology of African history, the process began in most parts of Africa in the later nineteenth century. It was well advanced by about 1929; but the depression and the Second World War slowed up the process: things were little if at all more advanced in 1945 than in 1929. Hence the main thrust of post-1945 colonial schemes for economic, social, and political "development" was to resume the momentum of transformation. By the later 1950s much progress had been made, particularly in those parts of Africa that had had the longest exposure to the international economy. In these at least, notably France's North African protectorates and British West Africa, progress was so advanced by the mid-1950s that their colonial masters felt they could safely transfer formal political power. Many other territories had clearly not reached that stage by 1957–1960, when the Gold Coast and Nigeria received independence; and the imperialists had then to face the need to establish a timetable for the remaining territories. Until perhaps 1957–1958 it had been assumed in London, Paris, and Brussels (with Portugal still committed to permanent integration of her African territories with the fatherland) that each colony had to be treated as a special case: decolonization would come only when certain "objective" conditions had been met.⁶

By the later 1950s, however, two factors stimulated the powers to speed up the process. On the one hand the experience of the Gold Coast and Nigeria during their semi-independent apprenticeship in the 1950s suggested that the successor African rulers were not only more competent to run their countries efficiently than had been expected (with the aid of continuing European administrative support), but also that they were eager to safeguard and

6. For evidence on this see in particular J. M. Lee, *Colonial Development and Good Government*, 1939–64 (Oxford, 1967); J. M. Lee and M. Petter, *The Colonial Office, War, and Development Policy* (London, 1982); W. R. Louis, *Imperialism at Bay* (Oxford, 1977).

promote foreign capitalist enterprises. Second, according to the radical argument, the evolution of political organizations pledged to work for independence in the colonies did not merely cause inconvenience (hardly more: there were no “freedom” fighters in sub-Saharan Africa except in the Portuguese territories) to colonial governments but suggested that the best policy for the imperialists was to establish good relations with their assumed successors before they became embittered by years of friction and waiting. Even the interests of white settlers in East and Central Africa would have to be sacrificed to these overriding considerations.

The result was a quite unpredicted transfer of power to virtually all African colonies, other than those of Portugal, between 1957 and 1965. In many places the transfer constituted a gamble on the part of the imperialists that the process of restructuring had gone far enough to be irreversible. In a few places, at least superficially, it later seemed that the gamble had failed: Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique claimed, in different ways, to have destroyed their links with the imperialist West and cut the umbilical cord of capitalism. Most other new states proclaimed themselves to be “socialist” and, in varying degrees, altered the rules of the economic game as they affected foreigners. Yet, so the argument goes, this was largely rhetoric. The essential dependence of virtually all these new states on Western aid, combined with the interests of the new dominant groups in each state, ensured that in reality all remained embedded within the international economic system in the roles originally allotted to them. Indeed, the policies they adopted of rapid social and industrial development provided an unprecedented opportunity to foreign investors, particularly the multinationals, which, it is important to note, had shown remarkably little interest in industrial investment in tropical Africa before independence. “Neocolonialism,” “dependence,” or whatever one calls it, was thus the intended result of decolonization, just as the cultivation of groundnuts, palm oil, and cocoa had been the planned consequence of ceasing to transport Africans to the New World in the nineteenth century.

This scenario is attractive because it seems inherently likely. It is, moreover, very similar to the arguments produced by B. R. Tomlinson and others to explain why Britain was increasingly ready to leave India by the 1940s, but not earlier.⁷ But it may not be true, or be only partly true, of Africa. Such large

7. In *The Political Economy of the Raj, 1914–47* (Cambridge, England, 1979) he argues that each of the three earlier reasons that induced Britain to hang onto control of India as long as possible—the army, the market, and control of a range of financial matters (currency, payment of Indian government liabilities in London, etc.)—had lost force by 1937. The Second World War completed the process, so that Britain had little left to lose and much, it was hoped, to gain by an amicable transfer of power. This hypothesis seems to be supported by recent detailed studies of the British decision-making process after 1945.

hypotheses always tend to argue backward from ex-post situations. Many of those who, after decolonization, proclaimed that liberating the colonies had all along been Britain's intention and that the Commonwealth fully justified her liberality, would, in the 1920s to the early 1940s, have opposed rapid devolution of power to India or the African colonies. In the same way, the fact that economic links between the one-time metropolises and the new states of Africa remained close after independence, and that private capital often found much better opportunities than before, may suggest that such results were expected and that these expectations encouraged officials and capitalists to look forward to decolonization without fear and possibly with enthusiasm. Let us treat all such assumptions with suspicion. It may have been so, but equally it may not. What is the evidence?

In all matters connected with overseas possessions the historian has to deal with at least two collective attitudes: that of the official mind and that of private interests. Let us investigate briefly how much is known about the attitudes of each of these to the economic dimensions of decolonization before it happened.

THE OFFICIAL MIND

The great irony of decolonization in Africa is that it came almost immediately after the post-1945 period when the metropolitan powers had regarded their colonies as an essential economic foundation for their own recovery and future development.⁸ These metropolitan states squeezed and exploited their colonies in Africa (and also in Southeast Asia) in ways never seen before by means of a complex network of administrative controls: currency pools to channel all colonial dollar earnings to London, Paris, or Brussels, bulk purchase of commodities to keep down prices in the metropolis, limitation of the export to colonies of manufactures that might earn hard currency elsewhere, building up credits representing the surpluses of marketing boards, hard currency earnings converted into sterling balances or francs, and so on. A rough calculation suggests that between 1945 and 1951 Britain extracted some £140 million from her colonies, putting in only about £40 million under the Colonial Development and Welfare acts.⁹ Thus it would then have been suicidal to transfer

8. This section owes a great deal to a number of unpublished papers by N. J. Wescott and to discussions with him about them: notably "Sterling and Empire: The British Imperial Economy, 1939-1951"; "The Politics of Planning and the Planning of Politics: Colonialism and Development in British Africa, 1930-1960"; and, with M. P. Cowen, "British Imperial Economic Policy During the War."

9. D. K. Fieldhouse, "The Labour Governments and the Empire-Commonwealth, 1945-51," in R. Ovendale, ed., *The Foreign Policy of the Labour Governments, 1945-1951* (London, 1984), p. 98.

political power over the dependencies and so give them the opportunity to break out of this economic cage. Or, to put it another way, it is inconceivable that decolonization could have occurred in any European possession in Africa during the postwar economic crisis.

But by about 1952 that crisis was over: in 1953 Britain's balance of payments was in surplus, the dollar shortage at least temporarily over, European economic recovery well advanced, international trade moving freely, and European currencies becoming increasingly convertible. Conversely, and most significant, after the Korean War boom, commodity prices dropped from 1952. From that year British colonies as a whole began to run a deficit with the dollar area, so instead of providing support for the pound sterling they became a burden that became increasingly heavy as these currencies weakened later in the decade. Thus the most important new economic fact of the 1950s was that, with the end of war and postwar shortages, it was no longer necessary or useful to keep political control over African dependencies in order to harness them to the bogged-down imperial economies.

Once this was so, a number of economic or political factors began to support the case for decolonization. None was a sufficient motive in isolation, but collectively they not only neutralized the perceived benefits of political control but, on balance, probably encouraged the politicians to act.

One significant factor was experience in several colonies of the difficulty of mobilizing sufficient public support for what were perceived to be essential development projects of many kinds: for example, measures against soil erosion in Kenya. Deeply committed now to the concept of developing colonial economies, officials were coming round to the view that only elected indigenous governments, provided they were of the right kind, could carry their peoples with them into modernization. From the British side a number of economic and financial arguments for giving up the huge responsibilities undertaken since about 1940 were being aired in the mid-1950s. Colonial demands on the London capital market were tending to increase interest rates. The cost of aid under the CD&W acts was escalating, and it was still believed in the mid-1950s that such aid would cease when colonies became independent. The cost of bulk purchase of sugar from the British West Indies (one of the few residual bulk-purchase agreements) seemed too high now that world prices had fallen below the contract price. There was even some fear that imperial preference would enable newly industrializing colonies to compete unfairly with British manufactures.

By January 1957 such fears had induced Harold Macmillan, newly appointed as prime minister, to ask officialdom what was probably an unprecedented question: what costs and benefits might result for Britain if the remaining colonies were given independence in the near future. The collective reply, as

summarized by the official historian of Colonial Development, D. J. Morgan, was ambiguous.

The conclusion was drawn that the economic considerations were fairly evenly matched [because, while Britain might save on some types of expenditure, there might be costs resulting from reduction of special commercial advantages she enjoyed in the colonies]. Consequently, it was felt that the economic interests of the United Kingdom were unlikely in themselves to be decisive in determining whether or not a territory should become independent. Nor was it believed that strategic considerations should be uppermost, as the maintenance of bases against the will of the local Government and people would seriously limit their usefulness.¹⁰

This neutral reply may not have given Macmillan much help in deciding future policy but it did at least suggest that the official mind in Britain did not now regard economic factors as being decisive either way. Indeed, the current consensus was that the essential aim must now be to secure the goodwill of those who would eventually succeed to political power in the colonies. The report of an official committee advising the cabinet in 1959, in Morgan's words, stated: "It was taken for granted that Africa would continue to be an important market and that, whatever the political future, Africans would continue to desire to trade with us."¹¹ Indeed, political and strategic considerations were far more significant. As Sir Roger Stevens put it in 1961, in spite of Britain's substantial commercial and other interests in Africa, the latter's chief political importance for the West derived from the Cold War.¹²

For British officials, at least, it therefore seems clear that willingness to transfer complete political power to colonies as soon as the transfer could be made decently—that is, to a democratically elected government which could reasonably be held to represent a "national will"—was not in any direct sense the outcome of economic considerations. Rather, one might say that the mid- and late 1950s, when general decolonization became an established British policy aim, were, in economic terms, a slack tide. Before about 1951 Britain's dependence on colonial currency earnings and commodity exports would have made such a policy inconceivable: indeed, it has been argued that the primary aim of the first tentative steps toward giving self-government in West Africa in the later 1940s were intended primarily to extend the period of imperial control by keeping ahead of nascent nationalist demands before they

10. D. J. Morgan, *The Official History of Colonial Development*, 5 vols. (London, 1980), vol. 5, p. 102.

11. Morgan, *The Official History*, vol. 3, pp. 87–88.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

became unmanageable.¹³ After about 1960 the inconvenience of controlling these movements might well have forced Britain to evacuate in indecent haste, without the satisfaction of going through the now established rituals and, above all, at the risk of losing goodwill and therefore future economic opportunities.

The 1950s were therefore a decade in which economic considerations were virtually neutralized. Britain was free to decolonize because, for the moment, she did not depend on colonial economic support. Conversely, the official mind never consciously decided that British economic and investment interests would do better under independent African regimes. On the assumption that independence was bound to come sooner or later, policy was to make it sooner, in the hope that a friendly parting would have the fewest possible bad effects on British political and also economic interests in Africa.

NONOFFICIAL ATTITUDES: BRITISH BUSINESS

It is far more difficult to know what attitudes British business as a whole took toward the prospect of decolonization in Africa than what the officials thought. On the one hand it is not the concern of businessmen to state their attitudes publicly on this sort of issue, and their records seldom spell out their views on general principles. On the other hand very little work has been done or published on what these men said within their board rooms. Indeed, I know of only one study that deliberately sets out to analyze such attitudes, J. E. Milburn's *British Business and Ghanaian Independence*¹⁴; and in many ways this book provides disappointingly little hard evidence. Milburn probably had the same experience as I had when researching on Unilever's overseas enterprises, that the records are remarkably silent.

The general impression, however, is that British business firms never thought very clearly about the prospects of decolonization. Certainly they did not regard it as the logical consequence of a process of restructuring colonial economies to the point at which political control was no longer necessary or desirable. For the Gold Coast, Milburn shows that the main British firms had begun the process of Africanizing management well before the 1950s: United Africa Company (UAC) and John Holts in the import-export trade; Barclays Dominion, Colonial, and Overseas (DCO) in banking; Cadburys in cocoa pur-

13. See in particular R. E. Robinson, "Andrew Cohen and the Transfer of Power in Tropical Africa, 1940-1951," in W. H. Morris-Jones and G. Fischer, eds., *Decolonization and After: The British and French Experience* (London, 1978).

14. London, 1977. See also Miles Kahler, *Decolonization in Britain and France* (Princeton, 1984), chap. 4, for a general survey that provides little primary evidence on the attitudes of British and French business but supports the argument of this section.

chasing; and, in mining, Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST) and Ashanti Gold Fields. But, significantly, all were following the logic of costs rather than political prevision. The process was conditioned by the nature of the work required and the limited stock of sufficiently educated Africans. As a proportion of the total management, however, African managers in UAC changed hardly at all between 1949 and 1957: the big change came after independence, and from 1957 to 1964 the percentage nearly doubled.¹⁵ None of these firms seems to have played an active role in supporting or initiating proposals for political development. As Milburn puts it, "The firms did not oppose political changes, nor did they try to arrest the increased political activity of the Ghanaians. They waited until changes took place and then attempted to cooperate with the new political leaders—though there is some suggestion that one mining magnate was less unconcerned. In support of this argument Sir Alan Burns remarked that most companies in the transitional 1950s contributed funds to all parties but that none of the companies took any part in pressing for or against independence."¹⁶

The same cautious but not pessimistic attitude was adopted by Unilever in their various manufacturing and plantation enterprises in different parts of Africa. In Nigeria¹⁷ the small soap factory established near Lagos in 1923 had been a very limited enterprise until 1940. The war acted as a stimulus: soap sales rose from a peak of 4,400 tons in 1937 to 10,643 tons in 1946; the range of products was greatly expanded, and profits were high from 1941 to 1956. This generated optimism; but for Unilever the first impact of political change came in 1954 when the three previous regions were made into semi-autonomous states whose assemblies controlled economic policy. The company's response was positive. A marketing expert advised in that year that it was now essential, for "overwhelmingly political reasons," to expand by building a second factory in the new eastern region, since it seemed likely that, if Unilever did not get there first, the new regional government might set up its own factory. Moreover, he thought, "the new form of government might be more cooperative [than the British authorities had been] and more anxious to attract industrial capital and encourage industrial products. . . ." The London management accepted the proposal in December 1954 on the following grounds:

In considering the whole project it was necessary to take account of the probable future political development of the country. Although it was possible to have doubts in this respect, having regard to the rapid

15. Milburn, table 1, pp. 79–80.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 144 n.46, p. 94.

17. D. K. Fieldhouse, *Unilever Overseas: The Anatomy of a Multinational, 1895–1965* (London, 1978), p. 362. Developments in Nigeria are outlined on pp. 345–79.

transition from colonial status to self government as elsewhere within the Commonwealth, there seemed no reason to have any special doubts about Nigeria.

The factory was duly built at Aba. It proved a commercial disaster because the market did not in fact justify a second production unit. But political considerations remained paramount. In 1965 the managing director of the whole West African business suggested that "it would be extremely dangerous from a political point of view" to close the Aba factory: indeed, the same considerations might make it necessary to build a third factory in the northern region. Unilever, in fact, saw Nigerian independence as a challenge rather than a threat or an advantage. Its main effect was to speed up changes in company policy already under way: the replacement of expatriate by Nigerian managers and the complete transformation of the UAC from a trading to a manufacturing and retailing enterprise.

Ghana provides a clearer example of the potentially stimulating effect of the prospect of independence.¹⁸ Until the mid-1950s there had never been any serious possibility of Unilever making soap in the Gold Coast: the market was too small, there was no tariff protection (a 5 percent revenue duty on imported soap was balanced by a duty on imported raw materials) and inadequate local production of raw materials. But when Kwame Nkrumah became prime minister in 1952 it became clear that he proposed to use every possible device to stimulate import-substituting industries; and from that moment Unilever was both forced to consider local manufacture in order to safeguard its large import market and also attracted by the prospect of good profits behind a predictable wall of tariffs and import controls. It took nine years of negotiations from 1954 before their new factory at Tema came into operation; but at no time did Unilever show either fear of or positive enthusiasm for the prospect of Ghanaian independence. The import trade was eminently satisfactory and carried minimum risks, so the company saw no positive advantage in independence. But equally, since decolonization was now clearly becoming a fact of life, one had simply to adjust policy to meet the new situation.

Such limited evidence can prove no general hypothesis. But it does suggest that British capitalism did not play a positive role in the decolonization of black Africa. For this there were many reasons. Few, if any, British firms actually stood to gain from a transfer of power: the dangers for foreign capital had already been demonstrated in South and Southeast Asia by the later 1950s, and capital was accustomed to dealing with the certainties of colonial government. Again, few businessmen seem to have foreseen the speed the process would gather in the late 1950s, as indeed few politicians did: all

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 412–17.

expected a much longer period of transition. They therefore made no short-term plans. Conversely, the evidence available from British West Africa before the early 1960s suggested that there was no great cause for concern, that the new regimes would positively welcome continuing foreign capitalist activity and might actively promote its interests in their drive for import-substituting industrialization. Big companies were confident that they could cope with changing situations by adapting their methods and activities: it was the small men—the white settlers of Kenya, the Rhodesias, and the Congo, Syrians in West Africa and Asians in East Africa—who had cause for fear that decolonization would destroy their world.

It is, therefore, reasonable to surmise that, as more evidence becomes available, it will become clear that decolonization was primarily a political rather than an economic phenomenon so far as British officials and businessmen were concerned. Their common ground was that, if the transfer of power had to come, the primary need was to establish good relations with the rulers of the successor states. This, in their different ways, is precisely what both groups attempted to do in the 1950s and early 1960s.

THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF DECOLONIZATION

Historians must always be aware of the dangers of a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* argument. To describe the dominant patterns of economic development in tropical anglophone Africa after decolonization—that is, from about 1960—is not to suggest that what happened was necessarily the direct consequence of the transfer of political power. There were both continuities and discontinuities, and it is in most cases impossible to draw a hard line between them. Successor states and development economists may point to dramatic increases in national incomes or to rapid industrialization, and claim that these were only possible because of the beneficent forces liberated by decolonization. On the other hand critics of “third world” regimes may suggest that in fact the best years for Africa were just before independence, perhaps in the booming 1950s, and that the almost universal economic disasters of the 1970s and 1980s demonstrate the unwisdom of adopting the types of “managed” economies most common in tropical Africa. There is no way of adjudicating between these standpoints. The basic question must, therefore, be whether it is possible to pinpoint specific factors that may, at least partially, explain the fluctuating fortunes of these states since about 1960. To do this it is proposed first to survey some of the main trends in economic development in black Africa as a whole at a highly aggregated level, so as to put the anglophone countries in perspective, then in the conclusion to examine evidence drawn

mainly from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania, looking for the origins of the major problems that have faced post-colonial African states as a whole.

Of one thing at least there can be no doubt: the quarter-century after 1950 was a period of growth in Africa that may (though no comparable statistics are available for earlier periods) have no precedent. In those years the overall per capita growth rate for the whole continent averaged 2.4 percent, compared with 1.7 percent for South Asia and 2.6 percent for Latin America. So impressive a performance cannot, however, be attributed to the transfer of power. For many countries there are no Gross National Product (GNP) or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures before 1960; but in those for which these are available the 1950s, with a per capita growth rate of 2.4 percent, were marginally better than the 1960s, at 2.2 percent, and nearly as good as the period 1970–1975, at 2.8 percent. Moreover, in some countries the 1960s were markedly less satisfactory than the 1950s: in Ghana the growth rate on a per capita basis slowed from 1.9 percent to 0.7 percent; in Senegal from 4.4 percent to 1.6 percent; and in Zambia from 2.7 percent to 0.5 percent.¹⁹

These were, nevertheless, excellent years for most parts of Africa. The later 1970s and early 1980s saw a serious slowing down of the rate of growth. According to the World Bank, the rate of growth of GDP for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa slowed from 3.9 percent in the 1960s to 2.9 percent in the 1970s (excluding Nigeria, from 4.1 to 1.6 percent), while per capita income growth over all slowed from 1.3 percent to 0.8 percent. If Nigeria is excluded, the low- and middle-income countries actually had a negative per capita growth rate in the 1970s.²⁰ Thus the basic question with which all students of recent African history must be concerned is why the apparent promise of these earlier decades appears to have evaporated.

Within this generalized picture, however, there are marked contrasts between different sectors of African economies. In most countries industry grew fast, with a growth rate of 3.3 percent in the 1970s, rising from 16 percent to 31 percent of GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1960 and 1979.²¹ General infrastructure and welfare indicators also suggest a quite impressive perfor-

19. D. Morawetz, *Twenty-Five Years of Economic Development, 1950–1975* (Washington, D.C., 1977), statistical app., table A1.

20. IBRD (World Bank), *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, D.C., 1981), app., tables 2 and 1.1. Commonly known as the Berg Report, this is the most reliable source of statistics for Sub-Saharan Africa during the modern period. The bank attempts to check all data it receives but is necessarily dependent on governments for much of it. It is therefore wise to treat the many statistics taken from the report in this chapter as indicating trends or orders of magnitude rather than precise amounts. Most of the data are printed in the statistical apps., which will be referred to here as AD, app., with the number of the table. Other data contained in the text will be referred to by page or the table reference: thus, AD, 1.1.

21. AD, app., 3, 4.

mance. For example, energy consumption per capita rose from seventy-six kgs coal equivalent to 128; life expectancy rose from an average of thirty-nine at birth in 1960 to forty-seven in 1979; and between 1960 and 1978 the proportion of the appropriate age groups in education rose from 36 percent to 63 percent in primary schools and from 3 percent to 13 percent in secondary education.²²

Other aspects of economic development were, however, much less promising. Most serious was the trend of agriculture. The overall growth rate by volume was only 1.3 percent in the decade 1969–1971 to 1977–1979, or –1.4 per cent in per capita terms.²³ Since most African exports are agricultural, it is not surprising that agricultural decline resulted in lower exports. The average annual growth in exports during the 1960s was 5.9 percent, but this dropped to –0.8 percent in 1970–1979.²⁴ Breaking this down into percentage shares of total exports, fuels (almost entirely Nigerian petroleum) rose from 3 percent to 49 percent between 1962 and 1978, and minerals rose from 7 percent to 10 percent; but food and beverages declined from 62 percent to 31 percent and “other primary products” from 21 percent to 9 percent. Manufactured products also declined, from 7 percent to 4 percent.²⁵ Between 1960 and 1978 Africa’s share of world nonfuel exports declined from 3.1 percent to 1.2 percent.²⁶

Declining exports (except from Nigeria) and increasing dependence on imported food in many countries, coupled with large imports of goods and extensive borrowing abroad, inevitably resulted in an increasingly adverse balance of payments and thus in foreign indebtedness. Between 1970 and 1979 the debt service of Sub-Saharan Africa rose from 1.4 percent to 2.0 percent of total GNP and from 5 percent to 6.9 percent of the value of exported goods and services. On average these figures were not high; but for individual countries they could be overwhelming. Thus the debt-service ratio as a percentage of the value of exported goods and services in 1979 was 59 percent in Guinea-Bissau, 33 percent in Sudan, 24.4 percent in Togo, and 19.7 percent in Zambia, to take a few of the worst examples. In fact, the weighted average for black Africa as a whole was greatly improved by Nigeria, with a debt-service ratio of only 1.5 percent.²⁷ For many African states this meant virtual bankruptcy, postponed by foreign aid and further borrowing, which in turn implied greater dependence.

22. AD, app., 6.

23. AD, app., 25.

24. AD, app., 7.

25. AD, app., 7, 8.

26. AD, 3.4.

27. AD, app., 40, 17.

Thus the general picture, ignoring the vast differences between countries that are obscured by these aggregate statistics, is of very considerable growth from the 1950s, which was slowing up by the later 1970s and appeared to be seriously at risk in the early 1980s. Within this, however, there were marked sectoral contrasts. Industry and the provision of infrastructural and welfare services grew very fast; but this was offset by a serious lag in the growth of agriculture. Food production was not keeping up with population growth, and many of the staple commodity exports were in decline. The result was increasing dependence on imported food and international aid, coupled with balance of payments deficits, heavy overseas borrowing and deteriorating debt-service ratios. By the early 1980s most parts of black Africa were in varying degrees of crisis. The golden dreams of the independence era were in ruins: it was no longer possible to hope that black Africa would be able to sustain rates of growth and patterns of development which might enable her to close the gap on the affluent West. It has become a main preoccupation of those concerned not only with African history but specialists in many related fields to find an explanation.

Broadly, there appear to be four main types of explanation, and these will be examined in turn. First, that there is in fact no cause for surprise at failure to sustain the high growth rates of the earlier decades, because great expectations were based on false premises. Second, that the check to growth was caused by Africa's relationship with the international economy and, in the thinking of the Left, with international capitalism. Third, that limited success was due to unwise policies adopted by the African states, whose consequences were merely accentuated by adverse international trends from about 1973. Finally, that there are major obstacles to rapid and sustained growth in tropical Africa which are not found to the same degree in other parts of the world. These explanations are not mutually exclusive. They will be considered in turn merely for clarity, and at the end an attempt will be made to measure their relative importance.

SOME GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The first point to emphasize is that, in so far as one can trust the statistics provided by national governments to multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations, African development has been neither disastrous nor exceptionally poor in comparison either with long-term trends or with other contemporary societies. The average growth rate of per capita incomes over the period 1960–1979 was 1.6 percent, which was the same as for all low-income countries for the same period.²⁸

28. *AD*, app., 1.

Never, probably, in the past has such a performance been achieved by Less Developed Countries (LDCs). Hence, the disappointments and complaints concerning black Africa relate either to particular countries or groups of countries; to different periods within these twenty years; or, finally, to Africa's performance compared with that of more developed countries. Again, to recapitulate, using these headings, development has certainly varied greatly within black Africa: a number of states, including Ghana, Senegal, Angola, and Uganda, had negative per capita growth rates during these twenty years. Conversely, the weighted average is greatly affected by Nigeria's oil-based growth rate of the 1970s. Moreover, the most serious feature of these decades seems to be a marked downturn in growth in the early 1970s, which suggests that whatever steam the development process may have had earlier was running out by then. And so one could go on. How should one look at or explain all this?

There is, of course, no single or certain answer: no one knows enough about the dynamics of economic growth fully to explain success or failure. For what it is worth, here is a personal amalgam of elements of arguments currently in play.

The starting point must be exaggerated expectations. The optimistic projections of the mid-1950s and thereafter were based more on hypothesis than on fact or historical experience. In many cases they took the favourable conditions of the 1950s, the first development decade for any country since the 1920s, as their model for the future. As Killick and others have since pointed out, most of their basic assumptions were as false as the very pessimistic projections being made ten years earlier, which were themselves based on the equally untypical 1930s.²⁹ Black Africa had no capacity to put infinite amounts of capital to good use. Young African states were quite incapable of carrying through the highly sophisticated development schemes the experts drew up for them. Industry could not, given the size and character of most of these states, take the rest of the unmodernized economy along with it: certainly

29. See, e.g., the assumptions in W. K. Hancock's *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. 2, *Problems of Economic Policy, 1918-1939* (2 parts, London, 1942), which reflect the experience of the 1930s in the same way that the development economists of the later 1950s and early 1960s based their assumptions on the boom period after 1950. For critical accounts of these arguments see in particular I. M. D. Little, *Economic Development: Theory, Policy and International Relations* (New York, 1982); T. Killick, *Development Economics in Action* (London, 1978), and "Trends in Development Economics and Their Relevance to Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* (JMAS) 18, 3; R. H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1981), and *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa* (Cambridge, England, 1983); D. Rimmer, *The Economies of West Africa* (London, 1984); A. M. Kamareck, *The Economics of African Development* (New York, 1971), and *The Tropics and Economic Development* (Washington, D.C., 1976); Anne Phillips, "The Concept of Development," *Review of African Political Economy* (RAPE) 8.

import-substituting industry could not generate an efficient intermediate or capital-goods industry in the short term. Agriculture could not indefinitely bear the weight of penal taxation to provide the necessary investment surplus for modernization, nor would it necessarily respond to the stimulus of industrial demand or be tempted into greater productivity by the availability of locally manufactured consumer goods.

It is significant that among those economists who were most critical of the typical approach of this period were two who had more direct knowledge of the facts of "third world" and black-African economic life than those who spun theories in Europe and North America. Both W. A. Lewis and S. H. Frankel (who had studied African conditions for many years)³⁰ held that sustained development in black Africa had to be built on improved agricultural productivity and could not be conjured up by ingenious economic theorization. Thus the principles on which most African development schemes and expectations were based may have been theoretically correct, given their prior assumptions, but they were essentially misleading in terms of African realities. Their signposts to the promised land pointed in the wrong directions, and we should not be surprised that African states who obeyed them ended up in Doubting Castle.

If, however, we ignore these over-optimistic projections, we are still left with the fact that many African states are now much less well placed for future development than it would have been reasonable to predict in the 1950s, even on the assumption that they continued on the relatively orthodox paths marked out by colonial authorities in that first, and last, decade of energetic colonial development. Colonies that then had large overseas credits, favourable trade balances, expanding agricultural and industrial production, modest unemployment, and public services that were both cheap and comparatively efficient, now have few of these things. Can this decline be ascribed to black Africa's unchosen place in a hierarchical international economy?

At least in terms of raw dependency theory it cannot. As P. J. McGowan argued in 1976,³¹ by the three standard measures of economic "dependence" (the proportion of aid received from the major donor country; the proportion of exports to the largest market; and the share of total exports taken by the three leading commodity exports), African countries were in no sense "de-

30. As a South African, Frankel had studied peasant food production at first hand, and his first major book, published in the 1930s, was on maize marketing. He was attached to Lord Hailey's team that produced the *African Survey* in 1938, and his later *The Economic Impact on Underdeveloped Societies* (Oxford, 1953) was a testament to his by then very unfashionable belief in the need for a gradualist approach to development in Africa.

31. P. J. McGowan, "Economic Dependence and Economic Performance in Black Africa," *JMAS*, 14, 1.

pendent.” Indeed, most of them greatly diversified their external relations during this period. But if one looks at the effects of broad trends in the international economy since the 1950s, the picture is somewhat different. It is true that the trends in the terms of trade, while variable, were not particularly adverse, that there were few effective inhibitions on exports to the West, and that aid flows did not fall off to any great extent. Nevertheless, African countries could not avoid the effects of the business cycle, which was certain to affect both the return for their exports and the cost of imported goods and credit. The 1950s and early 1960s had been a boom period for the world economy. The downturn came in the early 1960s. The all-item dollar commodity price index fell from about 1964 to 1967, then recovered in 1969, only to fall again in 1971. It was then raised by the 1973 OPEC oil price increase, only to fall to a new low level in 1975. After a rise in 1977 and subsequent fluctuations, it fell to a low level again in the early 1980s.

Within these global fluctuations particular commodities followed their own paths. Of the main black-African commodities, copper did well in the 1960s but suffered an annual price decline of 18.7 percent in the 1970s. Iron-ore prices declined by an average of 13 percent in that decade. Sugar prices declined during both the 1960s and 1970s, as did prices for tea, groundnut oil, and palm oil. Virtually all African export commodity prices declined during the 1970s and were joined by oil in the early 1980s.³² These trends were in no sense special to black Africa, affecting also Asia, Latin America and the developed countries. African countries, however, were particularly vulnerable at that stage of their development, heavily dependent on export prices and the price of foreign imports and credit to sustain their ambitious development programs. The effects were bound to be comparable with those of the slump of the 1920s and 1930s. The main difference was that black Africa was now much more exposed because of its increased dependence on foreign borrowing and on the imports necessary for its new industries and public-works programs. Just as exceptionally favorable international conditions in the 1950s and early 1960s had made possible high rates of growth, so less favorable conditions thereafter held back development until the next upturn of the international business cycle.

What, then, of the effects of the policies adopted by African states and the way in which they were executed? The evidence suggests that in varying degrees the effects of these policies were either unfavorable or, at best, neutral.³³ Without rehearsing the evidence, it seems clear that the broad

32. AD, app., 15.

33. Among the vast literature on industrial policies and their consequences the following are particularly useful: Rimmer, *West African Economies*; Killick, *Development Economics*; P. Kilby, *Industrialization in an Open Economy* (Cambridge, England, 1967); Tom Forrest, “Re-

interventionist strategies adopted by almost all states were undesirable roughly to the extent that they were "open" or "closed" economies. Ghana and Tanzania, which adopted highly structured and allegedly socialist policies, did worse in most respects than Kenya or Nigeria, though the latter was admittedly helped in the 1970s by oil revenues. Within this general framework, policies that aimed at the most rapid and complete import substitution for manufactured imports, especially by means of state or parastatal enterprises, were most wasteful of national resources: they added little or no value at international prices, had minimal impact upstream or down on other sections of the local economy, cost a great deal in foreign exchange and tended to be capital intensive, creating very little employment.

The use of multinational corporations (MNCs), commonly in partnership with government or private indigenous capital, was more efficient economically, but resulted in liability to provide foreign exchange for transfer of dividends, royalties, etc., as well as an "invasion" of national autonomy and an extended commitment to capitalism. Finally, there is debate over the extent to which these industrializing policies stimulated a genuine indigenous bourgeoisie. Ghana and Tanzania discouraged this development, Nigeria and Kenya encouraged it; and the evidence suggests that in Kenya at least there are the roots of what may grow into a genuine industrial bourgeoisie, able ultimately to challenge the MNCs for control of the modern sector of the economy.³⁴

If industrial policies seem to have had few if any beneficial results, agricultural policies (with Kenya a partial exception among the states considered here) were worse still.³⁵ Low producer prices, fixed by monopsonic market-

cent Developments in Nigerian Industrialization," in M. Fransman, ed., *Industry and Accumulation in Africa* (London, 1983); R. A. Joseph, "Affluence and Underdevelopment: The Nigerian Experience," *JMAS*, 16, 2; S. P. Schatz, *Nigerian Capitalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977); A. Hazlewood, *The Economy of Kenya: The Kenyatta Era* (Oxford, 1979); S. Langdon, *Multinational Corporations in the Political Economy of Kenya* (London, 1981); A. Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (Oxford, 1982); J. Rweyemamu, *Underdevelopment and Industrialization in Tanzania* (Nairobi, 1973); M. Bienfeld, "Evaluating Tanzanian Industrial Development," in Fransman, ed., *Industry and Accumulation*.

34. The main literature on the growth of an indigenous bourgeoisie, in addition to that listed in n. 33 above, includes: R. Kaplinsky, "Capital Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency in Kenya," *RAPE*, 8; M. von Freyhold, "The Post-Colonial State and Its Tanzanian Version," *RAPE*, 8; S. D. Mueller, "The Origins of Tanzania's Ruling Class," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* (CJAS) 15, 3; Paul Kennedy, "Indigenous Capitalism in Ghana," *RAPE*, 8.

35. Among the extensive literature on agricultural development the following are particularly important: R. H. Bates, *Markets and States in Rural Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1981) and *Essays in the Political Economy of Rural Africa* (Cambridge, England, 1983); B. Beckman, *Organising the Farmers: Cocoa Politics and National Development in Ghana* (Uppsala, 1976) and "Ghana 1951-78," in J. Heyer, P. Roberts, and G. Williams, eds., *Rural Development in Trop-*

ing boards, discouraged established export staples and also the marketing of domestic food products. Only Kenya, probably because of the continued influence of large-scale farmers and conventions established by earlier white settlers, gave producers a reasonable share of the value of their efforts; and there alone the adoption of a reasonable foreign-exchange policy protected producers from a further erosion of their returns resulting from over-valued currencies. Nor were state attempts to compensate for the decline or stagnation of peasant production by other means generally successful. State farms in Ghana were a disaster; subsidized capitalist farming there and in Nigeria was, for the most part, a highly inefficient use of scarce resources. Tanzania's various schemes for restructuring peasant communities and modes of production had precious little economic value, whatever the political return.

State policies in these fields (and one could of course add in most other fields, such as exchange policy, licensing of imports and production, the provision of credit and the distribution of economic goods) were thus almost uniformly unhelpful to economic growth. Where they were most constructive was in providing a range of infrastructural and welfare services, notably education and medicine, on which a greatly increased proportion of the national income was spent after independence. In the long term such expenditure may pay off; but in the short run its effects could be seen largely in rapid increases in population growth and in the number of literate people searching for jobs in over-crowded towns.

As to the roots of these public policies, the current consensus, which includes many on both the Left and the Right of the ideological spectrum, is that the basic cause of error lies in the character of political systems and the self-seeking of the successor elites. Whether seen as an indigenous petty bourgeoisie accumulating capital by engrossing the national surplus and by collaborating with foreign capital or, in socialist states such as Tanzania, as a state bourgeoisie accumulating through control of the state apparatus despite the principles laid down at Arusha, the verdict is almost universally adverse. The most common reason lies in the special needs of new political elites in ethnically divided societies to establish and maintain a viable power base for themselves, their families, their ethnic groups, or their class. In such a situation men cannot afford the luxury of public abstinence or probity: to survive they must subordinate national needs to private ones. Hence macro-economic strategies and micro-economic tactics are both designed to concentrate

ical Africa (London, 1981); K. Hart, *The Political Economy of West African Agriculture* (Cambridge, England, 1982); C. Leo, "Who Benefited from the Million-Acre Scheme? Towards a Class Analysis of Kenya's Transition to Independence," *CJAS*, 15, 2, and "The Failure of the 'Progressive Farmer' in Kenya's Million-Acre Settlement Scheme," *JMAS*, 16, 4; L. Freeman, "CIDA, Wheat and Rural Development in Tanzania," *CJAS*, 16, 3.

control of power and wealth. Once established, such systems and networks become self-perpetuating, though not usually with the same individuals at the top. Regimes may change and incoming governments announce high-minded self-denying ordinances; but underneath the bureaucrats, state managers and party functionaries cling to power and profit.

Solutions to the problem of incompetent and corrupt state management are legion: the Right generally proposes more genuine democracy plus a progressive dismemberment of systems of economic and social control that provide excessive scope for public malpractice; the Left demands true revolutionary socialism and the exclusion of the corrupting influence of foreign capital. Yet both prognosis and prescription are open to the same basic criticism: could things be otherwise in societies situated as African states were situated after decolonization? Could any regime survive without controlling whatever sources of public income existed? Conversely, could the most public-spirited and wisely advised regime have produced substantially better economic results? The answer to the first question must be no: the realities of immediately post-colonial Africa made it necessary for the new rulers to engross power in order to maintain the viability of their proto-nation states. To the second, however, the answer may be that better calculated policies, particularly in Ghana, might have prevented the huge waste of resources that made a mockery of Nkrumah's promise to make his country a paradise.

Yet it is difficult to believe that even in the best of all possible worlds black-African economic development would have been as substantial and sustained as the optimists of the early years predicted. This, therefore, brings us to the third of the main explanations of limited development outlined above: the existence of special obstacles to growth in tropical Africa in the second half of the twentieth century.

On the whole I find this an attractive approach. The fact that Africa's postwar performance, at least in terms of growth rates and the difficulty of carrying agricultural productivity along with industrial expansion, had much in common with that of much of Asia in the same period, suggests that there may be something in the belief that the tropics are peculiarly difficult terrain for the developer. Clearly many of the problems experienced in Africa stem from the factors listed by Kamarck:³⁶ variable rainfall resulted in discontinuities in food and commodity production; climate, plant disease, water shortages, and poor soils had much to do with the failure of attempts at large-scale schemes for mechanized agriculture, ranging from the groundnut fiasco in colonial Tanganyika to capitalist farms in northern Nigeria. Again, disease and malnutrition may have reduced the mental and physical efficiency of both

36. In *The Tropics and Economic Development*.

the rural labor force and the urban. Although such environmental problems can theoretically be overcome or mitigated by sufficient investment and effort, in the short run they have undoubtedly helped to make many development plans unworkable.

The proposition that limited human resources slowed down development is also obviously correct, particularly in the field of industrial management and public administration. All the studies suggest that at independence all African societies, though in varying degrees (the Belgian Congo being perhaps the most extreme example) were seriously lacking in men educated or trained in the higher levels of management and government. At the level of the factory floor, while African labor is adaptable, it has proved a slow process to develop many of the basic skills and attitudes to work that are taken for granted in the West. Ironically, urban labor was much quicker to develop attitudes and organizations based on Western trade unions than to adopt Western work ethics; and this made it possible for them to demand rates of pay and conditions of work that were often unjustifiable in economic terms.³⁷ This is one reason why both private and state industrial enterprises have preferred capital-intensive methods of production, despite the need for greater urban employment and the nominally low cost of wages. In the countryside it is the same. Even quite large capitalist farmers and managers of state enterprises have proved incompetent or careless in using the more sophisticated equipment and organizing their labor force. This is, of course, only to say that it took centuries to evolve that range of attitudes and skills which are characteristic of industrial societies in the West and which constitute its main asset. African countries possessed few of these assets at independence, and it was quite unreasonable to expect high levels of efficiency until they had been created by education and work experience. Until then the return to any form of investment is likely to be much lower than might be predicted by economists who take no account of such contrasts.

But ultimately the main check on the rate of African economic development has probably been, and remains, low productivity in peasant agriculture and, closely related to that, the social structures and attitudes of Hyden's "uncaptured peasantry."³⁸ It is significant that at critical parts of any analysis of limited African development agricultural production seems to constitute a major bottleneck. A very large proportion, usually above 60 percent, rising to more than 90 percent in the poorest countries, is engaged in agriculture; but agriculture is responsible for a very much lower proportion of the domestic

37. For a study of labor problems in Kenyan industry see the essay by R. Reichelt in P. Zajaczc, ed., *Studies in Production and Trade in East Africa* (Munich, 1970), pp. 123f.

38. G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania* (London, 1980), is the standard, and disputed, statement of this concept and its consequential assumptions.

product. In 1979, 78 percent of the Kenyan population was engaged in agriculture and was responsible for 34 percent of GDP. In Tanzania the figures were 83 and 54 percent, respectively.³⁹ Low productivity in turn reduced the market for domestic manufactures below the minimum economic level for large-scale production of many things, provided inadequate food for the cities, and reduced commodity exports, so putting a strain on the balance of payments. Agriculture was unable to provide many of the raw materials needed by industry, nor could it generate a sufficient surplus for public investment, despite all efforts to seize its profits. In short, Lewis was surely right when he wrote of agriculture in the Gold Coast in 1953 that "this half of the economy is almost certainly stagnant" and that "a vigorous agricultural programme is needed, not because food is scarce, but because this is the road to economic progress."⁴⁰

How far "stagnation" was or remains a necessary feature of the peasant mode of production remains a matter for debate, and assumptions have fluctuated over time. Prewar colonial governments believed that peasants, at least in West Africa, could and would produce all the market demanded, given enough professional guidance. Postwar colonial and then independent governments lost faith in the peasant in their preoccupation with rapid expansion. In the early 1980s the general failure of large-scale mechanized agriculture has led to the rediscovery of the merits of the peasant, again assuming he is given sufficient help and stimulus. Structured smallholder production systems along the lines of the Ghezira cotton scheme in the Sudan have come into vogue as a means of combining the efficiency of industrial management with peasant autonomy and flexibility.⁴¹

Yet fundamentally the problem remains. Peasant modes of production necessarily mean relatively low levels of productivity. To raise productivity, should the state invade the peasant domain and impose higher standards, at the risk of serious, counterproductive resistance, or bypass the peasant by establishing modernized state or capitalist agro-businesses? If the latter, it would be safe to continue to mulct the peasantry through monopoly purchasing organizations, since they would in any case be destined to marginalization. Ghana and Nigeria broadly adopted this approach. Kenya, in the end, did not; and, despite the relatively large proportion of "large" farms, occupying some 2.5 million hectares to the 3.5 million hectares of "small" farms, the smallholders' share of total marketed agricultural production increased from 41 to 51 percent of the total from 1964 to 1972. Smallholders produced some 58

39. AD, app., 35, 3.

40. W. A. Lewis, *Report on Industrialisation in the Gold Coast* (Accra, 1953), pp. 2-3.

41. For a critical survey of schemes of this kind see E. Graham with I. Floering, *The Modern Plantation in the Third World* (London, 1984).

percent of the food crop in 1974/75, increased production of coffee from 16,300 to 39,000 tons from 1964 to 1974 and of tea from 11,000 to 27,000 tons from 1971/72 to 1976/77.⁴² How much productivity has improved and the extent to which productivity increases with the size of holdings is not apparent from the statistics; but Kenya at least suggests that, given the right stimuli and sufficient state help, peasants can respond to market forces.

Hyden and others, however, have pointed out that Kenya is a special case in that many black farmers learnt modern techniques from and benefited from the demonstration effect of white farming. Moreover, the post-independence political elite was predominately landowning and prepared to encourage agriculture. In Tanzania also there was initially a thriving capitalist agriculture, based on plantations, white settlers, and a growing class of African capitalists. In the first years of independence production of the main export crops (there are no useful statistics for food) expanded well or, in the case of sisal, was static.⁴³ But from 1966/67 to 1976/77–1977/78 the index of the standard of living of rural producers declined from 100 to 72.8.⁴⁴ Official statistics claimed a growth rate of 6.5 percent in subsistence agriculture, but this is highly suspect, since large amounts of food had to be imported in the same period.⁴⁵ Thus in Tanzania, as in most of West Africa, the peasant mode of production failed to expand, despite its initial impetus; and the standard explanation is low producer prices and the turmoil associated with Nyerere's successive attempts to reconstruct the peasantry as an alternative to relying on large-scale capitalist agriculture. Kenya looks increasingly like an exception to the general rule.

The question therefore remains whether an unreconstructed African peasantry is consistent with sustained growth in the economy as a whole. The conservative view seems to be that with sufficient stimulus from a realistic pricing policy and adequate state help of all sorts this can be done. Others, including Hyden, are less certain. In his view it is of the essence of the peasant to put limits to the extent of his effort and production, however great the incentive to produce more. Only if he ceases to be a peasant and in fact becomes a capitalist with the capitalist's urge to accumulate, will his productivity rise indefinitely.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to produce policy conclusions but to examine reasons for limited African economic performance in the past. From this standpoint the evidence suggests that, so far, Lewis is right: you cannot build a modern industrial state or maintain the momentum of economic devel-

42. Hazlewood, *The Economy of Kenya*, tables 4.3, 4.8, 4.11, 4.15, 4.16.

43. Coulson, *Tanzania*, table 17.1.

44. *Ibid.*, table 20.12.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

opment in a predominantly agricultural country whose agricultural productivity is not rising at least as fast as the growth of population. In most parts of black Africa, and certainly in the four countries considered in this chapter, the per capita index of food production declined significantly in the 1970s and this was not compensated for, on the principle of comparative advantage, by sufficient increase in commodity production and exports to pay for imported food. Agriculture was not performing its essential development functions. We have seen many reasons for this failure, many of which could be eliminated. But it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that at root the problem was one of scale and technology.

As Lewis argued in 1953, how extensively a peasant can cultivate is determined by the means at his disposal; that is, whether he can improve his productivity. To replace hoes by a bullock and plough meant "multiplying by four the amount of land a family can cultivate in one year." Beyond that lay mechanization, which was expensive and difficult." But this is without doubt the line of progress."⁴⁶ By 1984 very few African peasants had bullocks or a plow, let alone tractors or access to them on satisfactory conditions. The failure to supply them or to make their use generally possible (for example, by eliminating tsetse fly) and economically worthwhile was probably the main economic failure of post-independence African states, as of their colonial predecessors.

46. Lewis, *Report*, p. 2.

6. *Libyan Independence, 1951:* *The Creation of a Client State*

W M. R O G E R L O U I S

“We are now reaching the culminating point in a three-years’ political operation of great delicacy and complexity,” Sir William Strang wrote on the eve of the birth of the Libyan state. Strang was the permanent under-secretary at the British Foreign Office and one of the architects of Libyan independence. This was a moment of uneasy jubilation: “We cannot even now say that nothing will go wrong: but we have good hopes. We have kept faith with the Amir, and he with us.”¹ He made that comment when the Amir, Sayyid Muhammad Idris, was about to assume leadership as king of the first African state to emerge free from formal colonial rule in the postwar period. On 24 December 1951, Libya became one of the five independent states of Africa, thus achieving the same status as Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, and South Africa.

The Libyan state was a British creation within the context of Anglo-American collaboration and United Nations sponsorship. Its formation reveals the classic themes of British imperialism recast in a postwar mold: the search for indigenous support, in this case with the Senusi of Cyrenaica; the quest for minimal yet necessary funds for the military occupation and administration during a period of prolonged British economic crisis; and the attempt to gain the cooperation of the United States and the United Nations in order to secure British strategic rights. This, then, is a study of British efforts to harness a

1. Minute by Strang, 8 Dec. 1951, FO 371/90350/JT1051/150. All F(oreign) O(ffice), C(olonial) O(ffice), CAB(inet Office) and PREM(ier) papers on which this chapter is based are at the Public Record Office, London. The principal historical studies of Libya are Majid Khadduri, *Modern Libya: A Study in Political Development* (Baltimore, 1963); John Wright, *Libya* (New York, 1969); and Wright, *Libya: A Modern History* (Baltimore, 1982). See also esp. Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya* (Princeton, 1986), chap. 12.

nationalist movement and come to terms with the economic and strategic dilemmas facing the postwar Labour government as well as to resolve the perplexities of postwar anti-colonialism.

The paramount goal was to secure Cyrenaica, the eastern province of Libya, as a strategic area that might serve as a substitute for the base at Suez. In the postwar period, as in the days of the scramble for Africa three-quarters of a century earlier, Egypt was the drive shaft in a vast geopolitical machine. When the British began to recognize that it might be desirable, and perhaps necessary, to terminate the occupation of the Canal Zone, Cyrenaica emerged as the most suitable alternative.² In winning this strategic position the British competed in a cockpit of international rivalry for supremacy in the eastern Mediterranean. The solution had to be acceptable to Britain's European neighbors, France and Italy, as well as the United States. At a critical time in 1949 the British rallied to the American plan for "independence" that would simultaneously satisfy the traditional aim of American anti-colonialism and check the danger of Soviet expansionism. Libyan independence proved to be satisfactory to the parsimonious and dyspeptic British Treasury, as well as the skeptical British public, because the subsidy to the Libyan government (eventually £2.75 million per year in budgetary aid and an annual grant of £1 million for development) would be modest in comparison to expenditures elsewhere and in any case a small price to pay for strategic security in the eastern Mediterranean.

Not least, the solution was agreeable to Idris, the leader of the Senusi, but in making these local arrangements the British found themselves confronted with problems of bolstering a weak monarch and devising a formula for both provincial and national stability. They were drawn ever deeper into internal as well as international complications. The British initiative in implementing the American scheme of Libyan independence would not have been possible without the active collaboration of the agent of the United Nations, Adrian Pelt.³ Yet, it would appear in historical reappraisal that Libyan independence was less of a United Nations or American makeshift operation and more of a sustained British effort. "It is still difficult to convince the French, Americans

2. An opposing school of thought had held that British power was shifting from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean and that Kenya rather than Cyrenaica should become the principal strategic base in the Eastern Hemisphere. The champion of this point of view was Sir Philip Mitchell, governor of Kenya. He wrote bitterly in 1948 after the Cyrenaican strategy had been endorsed by the Defence Committee of the Cabinet: "I suppose that the nation that built Singapore could hardly be expected to refrain from building another one in Cyrenaica." Mitchell to Poynton, 29 June 1948, CO 537/3514.

3. See his monumental account, *Libyan Independence and the United Nations: A Case of Planned Decolonization* (New Haven, 1970).

and Italians that we do not in some mysterious way still administer Libya," the first British ambassador, Sir Alec Kirkbride, wrote some months after the actual date of independence.⁴

In Libya as much as in any other territory under British sway, the viability of the regime after 1945 can be assessed in relation to the worldwide decline of the British Empire, the ascendancy of the Labour party in domestic politics, and the advent of the nationalist movements in Asia and the rest of Africa.⁵ In Libya after the end of the Second World War the British domestic part of the equation was never absent because of the sentiment within the Labour government that it might be best to cut losses, withdraw from the Mediterranean, and concentrate on developing tropical Africa, where there were fewer dangers of international interference and lesser problems of nationalism. This tendency to retrench, however, was kept in check by those who believed that Britain's position as a "world power" could be upheld. This was notably true of Ernest Bevin, the foreign secretary during 1945–1951. Apart from the question of the transfer of power in India, Bevin was the dominant figure in imperial as well as foreign affairs. His policy in Libya was systematically to strengthen the relationship with the Senusi and to adjust British policy to changing international circumstances so that the British position in Cyrenaica would be secured, whether by backing Cyrenaica as a trusteeship territory or by promoting independence for Libya as a whole.

This chapter deals with the critical three years in the creation of the Libyan state, 1949–1951, but it is important to bear in mind the debate about the significance of Libya that had taken place within the British government intermittently since the end of the war. "What do we mainly want?" asked Ivor Thomas, the parliamentary under-secretary for colonies in 1947. "Is it strategic rights in Cyrenaica? Or the exclusion of Russian influence from Africa? Or the friendship of the Arabs of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica? Or the restoration of good Anglo-Italian relations? Or the maintenance of the *Entente Cordiale* with France?"⁶ Those questions could not be answered without taking into account an issue in the Cold War that impinged on the Libyan controversy. The head of the East African Department of the Colonial Office, Andrew Cohen, realistically summed it up when he acknowledged that African questions had to be kept subordinate to grand strategy because Italy had to be kept "on the right side of the iron curtain."⁷ The Italian demand for

4. Kirkbride to Bowker, 17 May 1952, FO 371/97269/JT1015/62.

5. Wm. Roger Louis and Prosser Gifford, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 53.

6. Minute by Thomas, 24 July 1947, CO 537/2087.

7. Comment by Cohen in an interdepartmental meeting of 24 Jan. 1947, minutes in CO 537/2083.

colonial restitution led Bevin to endorse a proposal (known as the Bevin-Sforza Plan) that would have partitioned Libya into its three constituent parts of Tripolitania, the Fezzan (that is, the southwestern province under French occupation), and Cyrenaica. The three provinces would have been administered as respective Italian, French, and British trusteeship territories. This plan had the virtue of securing the strategic rights in Cyrenaica at little expense (assuming that the British would have managed to convert Cyrenaica into a "strategic trust" territory comparable to the American islands in the Pacific), but it was narrowly defeated (by only one vote) in the General Assembly of the United Nations in May 1949 as smacking of old-fashioned Western imperialism. Bevin now reversed his course, and he could do so having proved that he had at least tried but failed to win concessions for the European Allies. "We are coming to the conclusion," he wrote in July 1949, "that the solution for Libya must be independence."⁸ This was an adroit if Machiavellian affirmation of the American solution. "Independence" was the principal issue, indeed the only one, on which all parties directly concerned could agree.

This exercise in British state building was forged against the realities of Libyan geography and demography. Libya is the fourth-largest state in Africa. It is two-and-one-half times the size of Texas. But it is 95 percent desert. In 1945 it possessed a population of 880,000, 68 percent of which was Muslim and about 5 percent Italian. During the war the Italians had been driven out of Cyrenaica and the Italian community of some forty thousand was now concentrated in Tripolitania. There was a substantial Jewish population of about thirty thousand. George Bennett of the Colonial Office once made a penetrating observation that established the wider significance of the white settler community and the legacy of Italian colonization. His comment connected the Libyan question with the Palestine controversy. He wrote in 1946:

I believe it is now a choice between treating the Arab world as a whole (in which case we can look for good relations with it), or having a series of 'bridgeheads' along the Mediterranean coast into a hostile Arab interior. You can't play both policies at once. The French and the Zionists (and previously the Italians) frankly go for the 'bridgehead' policy. I don't believe that, with our wide Middle Eastern interests, we can afford to.⁹

Until 1949, Bevin's Libyan goals, as he himself acknowledged, were out of line with his general "pro-Arab" policy. After the defeat of the Bevin-Sforza Plan in the United Nations in May 1949 (which had been denounced through-

8. Bevin to Franks, No. 7222, Secret, 20 July 1949, PREM 8/921.

9. Bennett to J. S. Majoribanks, 15 June 1946, FO 371/57181.

out the world as blatant support for the reestablishment of an Italian colonial regime), Bevin put British policy back “on the rails” (his own phrase) toward the creation of an Arab state.¹⁰

Let there be no mistake that the dominant motive was the establishing of a strategic base in Cyrenaica. Bevin and the members of the Labour government apprehended eviction from Egypt. To secure Cyrenaica, they were prepared to pay a high price, perhaps by bartering the other former Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somaliland, which were also under British military occupation, perhaps by accommodating the Italians and the French as well as the Americans, or perhaps by constructing a vast national edifice based on Cyrenaica that would extend over Tripolitania and the Fezzan. All of those possibilities were studied by the Labour empire builders with an exuberant calculation worthy of their Victorian predecessors. It was the last that proved to be the most attractive, essentially for two reasons that went beyond the need to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations. During the war the Americans, at considerable expense—the figure usually cited is \$100 million—had constructed an air base at Mallaha (Okba bin Nafi, east of Tripoli), which they wished to revive and expand into a major installation. It eventually became known as Wheelus Field. The money paid to the Libyans for base rights and rent would go a long way toward subsidizing a Libyan state. The other reason why a Libyan polity proved to be feasible was because of the mutually advantageous link between the British and the Senusi, which developed into an effective political alliance. Here was a state that was to be subsidized largely by the Americans, held together by the Senusi, and controlled indirectly by the British.

Though Cyrenaican nationalism did not command loyalty in Tripolitania before the Second World War, after 1945 it generated an appeal that extended throughout all of Libya. Was this because of the dynamism of the Senusi reformist movement and the influence of Sayyid Idris, or the fear of the possible return of the Italians? There was a remarkable scholarly contribution to the contemporary understanding of these problems. In 1949 the anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard published *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, an important book that appeared at exactly the time British officials were pondering the meaning of Sufi mysticism and the *Ikhwan*. What was the significance

10. Bevin made that revealing remark after the defeat of the Communists in the Italian elections of April 1948 (minute by Bevin, c. 7 Apr. 1948, FO 371/69331). During this crucial period in European as well as postwar African history, he was clearly aware of the tension in his policy of appeasing the Italians and attempting not to alienate the Arabs. In other words he was playing the game both ways; and only after the dramatic defeat in the United Nations of the Bevin-Sforza plan did he shift decisively toward the Arab solution. What is remarkable is the dogged persistence with which he moved toward his goal in Cyrenaica.

of the Senusi order for the development of Middle Eastern or African nationalism?

Sir William Strang welcomed Evans-Pritchard's book as "excellent." It helped to clarify the nature of Senusi society and the struggle of the Senusis against the Italians. In the words of Michael Brett, who has translated the anthropological essence into the idiom of African history, "The warfare of the Cyrenaicans against the Italians . . . appears [to be] the perfect example of the ability of a stateless society, that of the beduin, to generate the rudiments of a state in the face of external attack, and by the same token, of a primary resistance to colonial penetration which became a movement for independence."¹¹ Nationalism in Libya thus had deep roots in the colonial era rather than merely the shallow subsoil of postwar power politics. The question, however, was whether Cyrenaican nationalism could unite *all* of Libya. According to Evans-Pritchard there might be insuperable geographical as well as other obstacles:

The people of Cyrenaica are linked to the classical Arab world of the east, to Egypt and the Jazirat al-Arab (Arabia, Palestine, Iraq and Syria) rather than to the Maghrib. . . . The desert comes down to the sea at the Gulf of Sirte and separates Cyrenaica from Tripolitania and these two countries have always gone each its own way.¹²

When Cyrenaica was linked to Greece and Egypt, Tripolitania had belonged to Phoenician Carthage. "Cyrenaica went with Byzantium, Tripolitania with Rome." With the rise of the Senusi order in Cyrenaica, the Tripolitani-ans had responded with animosity against it. The inference to be drawn from Evans-Pritchard's work was that the geographical, cultural, and religious differences between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania would prove too great to bridge. Sir William Strang preferred to regard this interpretation as "not decisive."¹³

The chances of unifying Libya would depend in large part on the ability, drive, and charisma of the Senusi leader. Here there was cause for skepticism. Evans-Pritchard wrote of Idris:

Nurtured, as were all the Sanusi family, in piety and learning in oasis retreats and accustomed to a refined and sedentary life, he has never been a man of action. . . . That he is vacillating and evasive cannot be denied, and though these characteristics may sometimes have been a wise response of the weak negotiating with the strong . . . they seem to

11. Michael Brett, "The U.N. and Libya," *Journal of African History* 13, 1 (1972): 168-70.

12. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (Oxford, 1949), pp. 46-48.

13. Minute by Strang, 22 July 1947, FO 371/73892/J6377/1516/122.

be weaknesses to which he is temperamentally prone and to have become an aversion to directness in either thought or action.¹⁴

Unfortunately for the British, Evans-Pritchard's description appeared to be all too true. It strengthened the impression of the Foreign Office that Idris was hardly a hearty enough nationalist to manage his own affairs, still less to extend his sway over all of Libya. According to a Foreign Office assessment:

While he has the interest of his people very much at heart, he has . . . no very strong personal ambition to rule them. . . . The fact that the small circle surrounding him is psychologically as much out of contact as he is himself physically with the local inhabitants means that more often than not the advice he receives is unsound. Having taken advice, however, he can be obstinate in refusing to go back on any decision reached.¹⁵

This appraisal also mentioned Idris's "innate indolence," his temptation "to throw his hand in and retire," and his "taste for a quiet life."

Ernest Bevin had no use for "tame Arabs." Here was one who did not appear to have the backbone or the fire in his belly necessary to make the British venture in Libya a success. Nationalist leaders were usually made of sterner stuff. In making their plans regarding Idris, the British had to rely on their own resourcefulness and resign themselves philosophically to a situation that in other circumstances might have been much worse. "[I]f Amirs and Princes were archangels," wrote George Clutton, the head of the African Department of the Foreign Office, "there would be little place in this world for either foreign servants or pro-Consuls." With British inspiration, Idris might prove to be a satisfactory leader after all: "The Amir is far from being a perfect character, but I doubt very much whether he is much more imperfect than many Eastern rulers who, under British guidance, have ended their days as respected benefactors of their people."¹⁶

It would perhaps satisfy the wish to see a sense of purpose in history to be able to regard Libyan independence as the triumph of a nationalist leader, as part of a march toward colonial freedom, or at least as the logical outcome of planned decolonization. The broader vision was there, but, as will be seen, it was negative, focusing on the possible reaction of the Arab states and new members of the Commonwealth who might regard the Libyan experiment as a continuation of the system of unequal treaties, or, as it was later known, the

14. Evans-Pritchard, *Sanusi*, p. 269.

15. Minute by I. W. Bell of the African Department of the F.O., 20 Dec. 1948, FO 371/73829.

16. Minute by Clutton, 30 Dec. 1948, FO 371/73829.

dependency relationship. There was no intention of setting a precedent for other African dependencies. Libya was merely a case where informal methods were preferable to formal. The aim throughout was to maintain Britain's position as a world power. Specifically, the transfer of power in Libya was intended to sustain British influence through King Idris and to establish a state that would provide both Britain and the United States with the right to station land and air forces on Libyan soil. The case of Libya thus reveals the grand strategy of disengagement in Egypt. And it also indicates constant improvisation in response to rapidly changing combinations of local, metropolitan, and international pressures.

1949: RESOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISSUE

In February 1949 Ernest Bevin asked for weekly reports "on all matters affecting Cyrenaica."¹⁷ As if anticipating rapidly developing and disagreeable events, he did not wish to be caught off guard either by the French or the Italians, still less by the Americans, or by what he referred to as the "Arab-Moslem-Asiatic bloc."¹⁸ Until the opening of the British archives it was difficult to ascertain the extent of Bevin's influence and the counterweight of the permanent officials. It is now clear that his grasp of policy is best compared with the great Lord Salisbury's during the original partition of Africa. Bevin played the same game with relatively fewer resources. It was he, not the permanent officials or even the other members of the cabinet, who called the shots in this new scramble for influence, if not territory. In all significant questions concerning the future of the Italian colonies Bevin made sure that he had the concurrence of the Defence Committee and, when necessary, the cabinet. And he regarded the matter as so important that he delegated authority only to trusted lieutenants.

Hector McNeil, the minister of state, was one of them. McNeil played a vital part in trying to put Bevin's ideas, in McNeil's own phrase, into the "conceited skull" of the Italian foreign minister, Count Sforza, and by serving as Bevin's personal emissary at the discussions on the subject at the United Nations.¹⁹ McNeil believed that the key to British success would lie in getting an American commitment in Tripolitania, either by persuading the Americans to take on trusteeship responsibility (a misguided hope) or by convincing them of the desirability of stationing troops there. "Palestine is no parallel," he wrote about the possibility of Anglo-American collaboration.²⁰ In telling

17. See minute by Clutton, 7 Feb. 1949, FO 371/73829.

18. Bevin to Franks, 20 July 1949, PREM 8/921.

19. See minute by McNeil, 6 Aug. 1949, FO 371/73885.

20. Minute by McNeil, 22 Feb. 1949, FO 371/73856.

words he once summed up his impression of the Libyan question and the tactics to be used with the Americans: "Our need is great: our case is not good. We must therefore be as naive as possible."²¹

On Bevin's instructions, the permanent under-secretary himself kept abreast of the Libyan question and attempted to weave the complex strands into a coherent pattern. During a visit to the Middle East in the spring of 1949, Strang paid a call on Idris in Benghazi. He made it clear to Idris that the British people were grateful for the support of the Senusi during the war. There were utterances about the "happy and mutually beneficial relationship." Nevertheless Strang's task was not an easy one. He had to explain to Idris why the British had allied themselves with the Italians and the French into what amounted to a re-partition under the guise of trusteeship—the Bevin-Sforza agreement. "It had however failed, thank God!" Idris told Strang.²² And a disastrous confrontation with the British military administration had only been narrowly averted (just a week before Strang's visit). In mid-May 1949 a crowd of three hundred had assembled in front of the British Military Administration headquarters in Tripoli carrying banners and shouting anti-Italian slogans. Shots were fired and were returned by the police. Each day the crowds grew, up to a strength of eight thousand by the end of the week, and had to be dispersed with tear gas and baton charges.²³ These local demonstrations were critical in the defeat (as will be recalled, by only one vote) of the Bevin-Sforza Plan at the United Nations. Here was a clear case of misjudging the extent of local anti-Italian sentiment and miscalculating the politics at the United Nations. The lesson was not lost on Strang, McNeil, or Bevin. After the riots of May 1949 Bevin frequently reemphasized a premise of his Libyan policy, which seemed to be all the more important after the disturbances. No solution would be imposed by force. In Bevin's own celebrated phrase, the Libyan problem would not be resolved by "British Bayonets."

Until the riots in Tripoli and the setback at the United Nations, Bevin had planned on keeping on good terms not only with the Italians in Tripolitania but also with the French by backing their claim in the Fezzan. He now held that the Italians would have to be content with Somalia. The French were another matter. Though he regarded French cooperation as "very much less important" than American, he believed that any settlement which adversely affected the French position in North Africa might eventually have repercussions in British Africa.²⁴ Not weakening the French Empire was a British

21. Minute by McNeil, 28 July 1949, FO371/73838.

22. Memorandum by Strang, 24 May 1949, FO 371/73835.

23. For the British military administration's account of the riots see the report of 18 May 1949, FO 371/73860/J5401/1515/122.

24. See minute by Strang, 1 Apr. 1949, PREM 8/921.

axiom. According to the chiefs of staff in an appreciation written in 1947, "it is essential that we hold securely the North coast of Africa." Therefore it was mandatory, in Bevin's own words, that "Tunisia, Algeria and French Morocco should remain under French control." Whatever the "shortcomings and mistakes of French colonial policy" might be with regard to the nationalist aspirations, the British would not intervene. The temptation to lecture the French, still less to meddle, would be resisted. "I cannot see why we should interfere with the French," Bevin had noted in 1947, by "fishing in troubled waters."²⁵ These "troubled waters" by 1949, however, included the oases of the Fezzan. The strategic points of Ghat and Ghadames were essential for French interception of the arms flow into Algeria.

The events in the spring of 1949 compelled the British to reassess the French position in North Africa. The appraisal of nationalism in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco caused some British officials to reflect that they had much more in common with the French than with the Americans. "What is at stake," observed Ivo Mallet of the African Department of the Foreign Office, "is not merely the suddenly inflamed ambitions of a few thousand Arabs, but the security of North Africa and our relations with France and Italy."²⁶ The agitated tone of Mallet's minute arose from the American response to the disturbances in Libya and the debacle at the United Nations. The Americans now believed, as a matter of urgency, that independence for *all* of Libya would be the best solution and that, if the French could be coerced into making plans for decolonization as well, then so much the better. Thus the Libyan problem had wide implications. Mallet wrote about an "independent" Libya:

[T]he creation of half-baked Arab states which have no traditions and no opportunities of remaining viable is hardly calculated to further our policy of increasing tranquillity and stability in North Africa. The catch-word 'independence', regardless of the conditions in the country in question . . . is not one by which the State Department should allow itself to be led astray. . . .

[W]hen it comes to bringing pressure on the French to institute measures towards independence in their North African territories, the proposal becomes sheer madness. . . . I can say of Morocco with complete conviction that if it was given independence in the near future the result would be immediate chaos. Moroccan nationalism is not a real force.²⁷

25. These memoranda and minutes are summarized and quoted in a memorandum by I. Mallet, 18 July 1949, FO 371/73892.

26. Minute by Mallet, 31 May 1949, FO 371/73880.

27. Minute by Mallet, 14 July 1949, FO 371/73892.

“Dangerous” was the word Mallet used to sum up American ideas about North African “independence.”

The reassertion of the American anti-colonial attitude at this time was a direct response to the riots in Tripoli and the remorse of guilt-by-association with the British at the United Nations. By giving reluctant support to the British plan for Italian, French, and British trusteeship administrations, the Americans had lost, in the judgment of the State Department official responsible for Libyan affairs, “a large amount of the reserve of good will which we enjoy among the Asiatics as the result of our treatment of the Philippines.”²⁸ It appeared to the British that the same naive panacea for the ills of the colonial world of the wartime years had now resurfaced with a vengeance. For now the Americans made no secret that independence beginning in Libya would eventually sweep through all of northwestern Africa. In the American view, these developments would be “inevitable.” “The Americans will welcome and press for early independence in Libya,” wrote George Clutton, “not merely as the only practicable solution, but also because they realise its effects on the French position in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The State Department have made no effort to conceal this from us.”²⁹

Some of Bevin’s most influential advisers attempted to persuade him to hold out against the Americans. For example, Gladwyn Jebb at this time was deputy under-secretary and especially concerned with Western European and United Nations affairs. He wrote:

As for ‘independence’ for Libya being ‘inevitable’ within the next year or two, I should have thought that was really carrying defeatist determinism too far! After all the string of rather backward Arab and Berber communities along the fringe of the Mediterranean are strongly penetrated by Latin Colonists who do, on the whole, represent the civilising influence; and to *encourage* them along the road towards ‘independence’ in the name of some obscure national morality or alternatively, out of a romantic love for Arab Sheikhs seems to me to be the height of folly.³⁰

The State Department, to Jebb’s exasperation, continued to press the idea of Libyan independence and the hope that pressure on the French might force them to move in the same direction in Tunisia, Morocco, and even Algeria.

28. See memorandum by Joseph Palmer, Secret, 27 May 1949, records of the U.S. State Department (National Archives), 865.014/5-2749 Box 770, printed in *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1949, 4, pp. 542–43. The developments in American policy are much better known than those in the British and can easily be traced in the *Foreign Relations* series.

29. Minute by Clutton, 31 May 1949, FO 371/73880.

30. Minute by Jebb, 2 June 1949, FO 371/73880.

Jebb returned to the charge in protest against an independent Libya which might be no better than another Burma:

I am myself rather alarmed by the prospect of a real row with the French. . . . I simply don't believe that an 'independent Libya' will be likely to be anything much better than a new Burma on a smaller scale or that undue fostering of 'independence' in the rest of North Africa would produce anything but chaos.³¹

Jebb's minute was discussed by Strang, McNeil, and Bevin. Though it helped to precipitate Bevin's decision, it was not in the direction Jebb desired.

Bevin held to his former view that there could be no question of bringing pressure to bear on French colonial policy, though he had no doubt that "we are in for trouble with the French." He was "not disposed to resist" a United Nations resolution that would provide for Libyan independence "by about 1953."³² This was a turning point. It is clear in retrospect that Bevin's acquiescence in July 1949 was one of the decisive moments in actually bringing about the birth of the Libyan state. As Sir William Strang noted later, it was obvious, at least to the Foreign Office, that Libya would need "to be the client of some Power."³³ The task now was to make sure that Libya would become a British client-state.

The other chronological landmark for Libya in the year 1949 was the United Nations resolution on 21 November. It must not be assumed that Bevin's path toward it was clear and straight. He was sceptical, in this case, about the reliability as well as the motives of the Americans, and neither he nor anyone else had devised a satisfactory method of dealing with the anti-colonialism of the United Nations. The Americans seemed "to be anxious to land us with responsibilities for the defence of the whole of Libya," Bevin is recorded as saying in words that deserve to be emphasized, "*and in fact to use us as their mercenaries to ensure their own strategic requirements.*" Bevin thus had no illusions about what he believed to be the reality of American independence proposals. As for the United Nations side of the question, "Egypt and India seem to be concerned to get us out of Libya, and with this object in view the Egyptians are apparently quite ready to gang up with the Italians."³⁴ Until a few days before the United Nations voted on the resolution, Bevin kept an open mind whether it might not be better to try to sabotage it in the hope of being able to work out a treaty unilaterally with Sayyid Idris. Increasingly it became a choice of the lesser of evils: going along with the United Nations and

31. Minute by Jebb, 13 July 1949, FO 371/73892.

32. As recorded in minute by Strang, 14 July 1949, FO 371/73892.

33. Minute by Strang, 24 Nov. 1949, FO 371/73840.

34. Minute by Barclay, 24 Oct. 1949, FO 371/73890.

having to accept conditions for Libyan independence dictated by the anti-colonial bloc, or going it alone in defiance of both the United Nations and the United States. Ultimately the United Nations scheme stood the test of British self-interest, though not before it had survived the assault by the chiefs of staff.

Less than two weeks before the Libyan issue came to a vote in the General Assembly of the United Nations, the chiefs of staff felt it their duty to emphasize the "strategic implications of an independent and united Libya." This was a major assessment, in which they viewed Libya as an essential part of the Middle Eastern "pillar of British strategy." The fate of Libya would shortly be decided at the United Nations (the reason for the timing was the deadline imposed by the failure to resolve the issue of the Italian colonies by the Council of Foreign Ministers). The chiefs of staff believed that the resolution of this momentous issue had nothing to do with the well-being of the inhabitants or the peace of the world, except negatively. The enemies of the British Commonwealth and Empire at the United Nations aimed, indirectly at least, at the altering of the political and strategic balance of power in North Africa and the Mediterranean. The chiefs of staff therefore wished to make it unequivocally clear how Britain's position as a "world power" might be affected:

Today, we are still a world power, shouldering many and heavy responsibilities. We believe the privileged position that we, in contrast to the other European nations, enjoy with the United States and the attention which she now pays to our strategic and other opinions, and to our requirements, is directly due to our hold on the Middle East and all that this involves.

If we surrendered that hold and the responsibilities which it entails, we would automatically surrender our position as a world power, with the inevitable strategic and economic consequences. We should join the ranks of the other European powers and be treated as such by the United States.³⁵

It would be up to the British to hold the Middle East in the event of war with the Soviet Union. The United States would continue to respect Britain as a "world power" only as long as the British could defend the Middle East alone, at least initially. "[W]e must find a way of holding the Middle East at the beginning of a war with our own resources and of developing offensive action against Russia from that area. We believe this can be done. It must be done."

It could be done only, the chiefs of staff held, by maintaining forces in the

35. Chiefs of staff, "Strategic Implications of an Independent and United Libya," C.O.S. (49)381, 10 Nov. 1949, DEFE 5/18.

Canal Zone at Suez at the level of ninety-five hundred fighting troops (with additional auxiliaries) and a balance of eleven thousand troops in Cyrenaica. This was a time when the British military authorities believed that the Canal Zone negotiations with the Egyptians could still be resolved by reducing numbers rather than by evacuation. In any case there would have to be a redistribution of troops in Cyprus, Malta, the Sudan, and above all in Cyrenaica.

Lying adjacent to Egypt, forces stationed in Cyrenaica can most easily co-ordinate their higher training with our garrison in the Canal Area or, in an emergency, be moved quickly into the Delta either overland or by a short sea route. The climate is good and the country provides better training areas for the type of warfare we anticipate than elsewhere in the theatre.³⁶

Cyrenaica was thus an area of critical military significance. "We are counting on a treaty with Amir Idris to retain these facilities for us when Cyrenaica attains her independence," the chiefs of staff reiterated.

Ernest Bevin essentially accepted the logic of the chiefs of staff, though not all of their conclusions. His own ideas had been developing in the same direction since the end of the war. "The first priority must be the accommodation of our forces in Egypt," i.e., in the Canal Zone, he stated in November 1949. "The second priority should be Cyrenaica. Tobruk should be the base and our military and Air Force establishments should be economically built."³⁷ Bevin's thoughts thus continued not only to reveal his optimism about the Canal Zone but also the way in which the Libyan question could be reduced, as far as the British were concerned, to a strategic and military issue. If the worst came to the worst, the Suez base could be evacuated and Cyrenaica would become Britain's principal base in the Middle East. Bevin's principal difference with the chiefs of staff was that he believed the goal could best be achieved in cooperation with the United Nations, even though his own advisers as well as the military authorities found the United Nations conditions highly disagreeable.³⁸ He characteristically attempted to turn adverse circumstances to British advantage. In late 1949 Bevin decisively implemented British policy in Libya under the umbrella of the United Nations.

36. *Ibid.*

37. As recorded in a minute by Strang, 26 Nov. 1949, FO 371/73895.

38. For these discussions see minutes in FO 371/73893. Sir Roger Makins (deputy under-secretary) commented: "I am now convinced that if the Resolution goes through . . . we shall not get a treaty with Cyrenaica alone, and that the choice will lie between a treaty with the whole of Libya or no treaty at all" (minute of 20 Oct. 1949). Bevin noted, "I agree."

On 21 November the British voted in favor of the United Nations resolution, which included:

1. That Libya, comprising Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and the Fezzan, shall be constituted an independent and sovereign State;
2. That this independence shall become effective as soon as possible and in any case not later than 1 January 1952.

The resolution passed with a vote of forty-nine to none, with nine abstentions. The abstentions included the Soviet Union, which denounced the British and French "puppet governments." France also abstained, maintaining that the solution departed from "common sense." "It was the French who were likely to be our friends in this matter," Bevin noted afterwards.³⁹ It could be argued that the Russians, the French, and the British each in their own way held realistic attitudes. With the perspective of some thirty-five years and the benefit of archival sources, it is the Egyptian outlook, among others, that appears to have struck a note of false optimism: "[M]illions of people in Africa . . . looked to the United Nations for justice and liberty."⁴⁰

1950-1951: IDRIS, THE UNITED NATIONS, AND THE UNITED STATES

"I think he will make a good King of Libya," a member of the British Residency at Benghazi, Malcolm Walker, wrote of Sayyid Idris in an assessment that took full measure of the Amir's diffident character. The British on the whole were willing to give Idris the benefit of the doubt (though, as will be seen, severe criticism was not lacking) and believed that he might develop into an effective political leader. In Walker's judgment, based on extensive Middle Eastern experience, "He will always be a bit remote and, by comparison with Ibn Saud or King Abdullah, perhaps rather inaccessible. . . . But I am not sure that this matters. His influence comes after all primarily from his religious position as Head of the Senussi Sect and it is not unreasonable that a religious leader should be rarely seen by his followers." Despite his aloofness, his influence extended throughout Libya, into Tripolitania as well as in the Fezzan, and most Libyans agreed that he was the only figure who might lead a united Libya into independence, even though they passionately disagreed on what form of government the new state should have. Part of the reason for the acceptance of his leadership in the Fezzan arose from fear of Tripolitanian

39. See minute by Strang, 26 Nov. 1949, FO 371/73895. For the important memorandum drawn up for the Defence Committee of the cabinet in the aftermath of the U.N. resolution, see "Future Developments in Libya," D.O. (49) 85, 19 Dec. 1949, CAB 131/7.

40. Quoted in Pelt, *Libyan Independence and the United Nations*, p. 106.

domination. In Cyrenaica, Idris was identified with the older generation of nationalists who wished to see Cyrenaica itself become an independent state, and to his intimates he did not conceal his contempt for the Tripolitarians. Yet he remained on good terms, generally, with the younger nationalists of the Omar Mukhtar Clubs (named after the guerrilla leader hanged by the Italians in 1931) who aspired to a united Libyan nation. His leadership was respected among the Bedouin as well as in Benghazi. "[I]n many ways he seems to have his finger very firmly on the Cyrenaican pulse," Walker concluded.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the contemporary tendency was to underestimate Idris as a political figure. This was true of the British and Americans as well as his Tripolitanian and Egyptian adversaries. Only in the post-independence period did the British fully acknowledge that the king possessed the drive and determination as well as the acumen to hold the Libyan state together. The kingdom of Libya lasted for eighteen years, until the revolution of 1969. A member of the African Department of the Foreign Office thus made an accurate prediction in 1952 when he reflected that Idris "will be the most permanent force in Libya and the only man who, in the last resort, could hold the Federation together."⁴² This was also the view of Sir Alec Kirkbride, the first British ambassador, who arrived in Libya from Jordan after having requested a transfer from Jordan after King Abdullah's assassination. Kirkbride had a lifetime's knowledge of Arab politics and took issue with those who believed that Idris suffered from a deficiency of character:

As I get to know him better, I realise that some of the descriptions of his [weak] character in common circulation are incorrect. It is said for instance that he never makes decisions. It is true that he takes a long time to reach a decision but, when he does they often seem to be right; he is also capable of taking quite a strong line, and sticking to it in a crisis. . . .⁴³

Since part of the fascination of the study of the transfer of power in Libya (as elsewhere in Africa) is the long-range as well as the immediate consequence, another contemporary British comment is striking in its accurate prognosis of the flaw in Idris's regime that ultimately contributed to the Libyan revolution:

One of the most unfortunate things about this country is the Senussi family. They are almost as numerous as the House of Saud and quite as grasping. Individually they are nice enough, but I fear they closely

41. Walker to Michael Stewart, 13 Dec. 1950, FO 371/81034.

42. Minute by A. G. L. Baxter, 23 Apr. 1952, FO 371/97267.

43. Kirkbride to Bowker, 31 Mar. 1952, FO 371/97267.

resemble a plague of locusts and much of the substance of the country is bound to be devoured by them.⁴⁴

"I can see no immediate solution," Malcolm Walker added, in words which were even more perplexing and urgent in the 1960s than the 1950s.

In the period before the transfer of power, Idris's political stamina was certainly misjudged by his foremost political rival, Beshir Saadawi. Beshir was the Tripolitanian nationalist who attempted to forge a unitary state that would draw its inspiration from Egypt and the Arab League rather than Britain and the United States. To Idris and the British he represented a formidable challenge. Tripolitania comprised two-thirds of the Libyan population. If Beshir could provide cohesive leadership, then, according to Kenneth Younger (minister of state at the Foreign Office), "we shall probably find ourselves faced in a year or so with a Government in Tripolitania which is closely linked with Egypt and the Arab League and strongly opposed to Western influence. We shall not get a Federal Libya under the rule of the Amir of Cyrenaica who is friendly to us. This will endanger our strategic plans in the Middle East at a time when our arrangements in Egypt are precarious."⁴⁵

Beshir had a chequered political and personal history. The catalyst in his early life had been the Italian invasion in 1911. In the interwar period in exile he became head of the Libyan Defence Committee and his name became indelibly associated with the pan-Arab extremists, including the Mufti of Jerusalem. Though no one doubted his patriotism, everyone regarded him as a political opportunist of the first rank. So often did he switch his allegiances that he was distrusted among Tripolitaniens as well as pan-Arabs, even though he could maintain that he was entirely consistent in his anti-British attitude. Thus he could explain that before the war he had briefly allied himself with the Italians in the belief that Arab liberation could be best achieved by cooperation with the Axis powers. His enemies believed that he had been bribed to abandon his pro-Italian position. In any case the British in the postwar period possessed evidence that he was in the pay of the Egyptians. According to an appraisal written by the British Resident in Tripolitania, "he is regarded as a paid tool of Egypt—a mercenary who will sell himself at any time."⁴⁶ This did not lessen his potential for damage to the British position. Beshir had considerable demagogic powers. For the British the question was one of how to minimize his influence, perhaps by banishing him. In mid-1950 he threw things into confusion by proclaiming that he would support Idris as head of a federal state. For Beshir this proved to be a miscalculation in the sense that he

44. Walker to Stewart, 13 Dec. 1950, FO 371/81034.

45. Minute by Younger, 27 Apr. 1951, FO 371/90385.

46. Memorandum by T. R. Blackley, 7 May 1951, FO 371/90386.

believed he could ultimately control Idris by coming into alliance with him. In view of Idris's reputation as a weak political leader, it seemed to be a credible gamble. To the British this veiled bid for a takeover of the future Libyan state became one of the gravest dangers of the transfer of power.

If Idris and Beshir were two of the principal Libyan protagonists, the ubiquitous Adrian Pelt proved to be a representative of the United Nations of almost mythical dimensions. As in most cases the legend is larger than the historical figure, though Pelt has good claim to be described as one of the fathers of the Libyan state. The initial British reaction to his appointment as U.N. commissioner in December 1949 was one of scepticism. "We are clearly going to have some difficulty with him," wrote the head of the African Department.⁴⁷ Another member of the same department wrote later that Pelt was the "villain" of the piece because of his "anxiety to present Libya as a perfect theoretical example of international cooperation [which] has led him to canvass support for ideas which, though superficially attractive, are fundamentally unsound and as dangerous to Libya's own interests as to those of H.M.G."⁴⁸ There was inevitable tension between Pelt and the British because of the anti-colonialism of the United Nations. But there emerges from the British archives a theme that is quite subdued in Pelt's book on *Libyan Independence*. He knew from the beginning that if his mission were to be a success then he would have to work closely with the British on all points of detail as well as principle, strategic as well as financial. "Collaboration" is an apt word to describe the working relationship.

In February and again in March 1950 Pelt had extensive discussions in London with Sir William Strang and Roger Allen (Clutton's successor as head of the African Department). These talks were highly satisfactory to the British. They received assurances from Pelt on the following points, among others:

(a) [He] agrees with our objectives in Cyrenaica, and is prepared to help us obtain a long term agreement with the future State of Libya in respect of Cyrenaica on the lines we desire. . . .

(b) He is prepared to support such an agreement in due course before the General Assembly of the United Nations. . . .

(c) He favours a loose federal constitution for Libya, and he considers that the Amir of Cyrenaica is the only possible Head of the future Libyan State. . . .⁴⁹

This was not a one-way street. Pelt insisted in turn that the British wait to

47. Minute by Clutton, 30 Jan. 1950, FO 371/81014.

48. Minute by Stewart, 19 Apr. 1951, FO 371/90361.

49. Memorandum by Allen, 6 Apr. 1950, FO 371/81018.

conclude a treaty with Idris until *after* independence, which meant a delay in strategic arrangements. Nevertheless, the accord was so mutually beneficial that it developed into an effective partnership. From the outset there was a remarkable acknowledgement that Pelt and the British would work to serve the interests of each other, but it should be noted that there was an occasional note of brutal determination that crept into British minutes. Bevin himself remarked that nothing should be kept back from Pelt, but that "our policy should go through."⁵⁰ And at a later stage Allen noted that "Mr. Pelt should be left in no doubt that we are prepared to run him down if he does not join the band-wagon."⁵¹

The critical constitutional issue on which the British and Pelt were agreed was that Libya should have a federal rather than a unitary government. "The immediate problem," Strang wrote, would be to establish "a simple form of government, not of a centralised type, but of a federal type." Pelt believed that if the government of the new state were to be "too centralised, it would lack stability."⁵² This was identical with the British view. A stable Libyan state would depend on strength at the provincial levels. And the greater the degree of autonomy in Cyrenaica and the Fezzan, the greater would be the degree of British and French influence. The more the centralization of power in Tripolitania, the greater would be the influence of Beshir Saadawi and the Egyptians. As Pelt later pointed out in his book, the problem of federation versus unitarism ran like a leitmotiv from beginning to end through the years 1950–1951.⁵³ This is not the place to relate in detail the history of the Libyan constitution, but it should be pointed out that, in the Advisory Council appointed by the United Nations, the British, French, and Americans together with Pelt and Idris indirectly had sufficient influence to keep in check the unitarists (consisting in the Advisory Council principally of Beshir and the Egyptian and Pakistani representatives). It was above all the British–United Nations (i.e., Pelt) combination that proved to be effective in defeating the aim of Beshir and the Arab states to create a highly centralized state that would, perhaps, be less vulnerable to foreign influence.

American involvement in the building of the Libyan state was deliberately kept as low-key as possible. "I think we must be extremely careful," wrote Andrew Lynch, the consul general in Tripoli, not to give the impression "of coming into Libya in [a] high-powered manner."⁵⁴ Support of the British

50. Minute by Bevin, c. 8 Mar. 1950, FO 371/81018.

51. Minute by Allen, 14 June 1951, FO 371/90363.

52. See memorandum by Strang, 20 Feb. 1950, FO 371/81015.

53. Pelt, *Libyan Independence*, p. 316. The most incisive contemporary British treatment of the constitutional issues is in a memorandum by Roger Allen, "Libya," 19 Feb. 1951, FO 371/90382/JT1511/87.

54. Lynch to Acheson, 20 July 1951, *Foreign Relations* 1951, 5, p. 1332.

indirectly bolstered the American position. Like the British, the Americans were wary of the possibility of a unitary state that might fall under extremist or Egyptian influence. The air base at Wheelus Field gave the United States a vested interest in Tripolitania. The plan for a federated state, however, might work out less well for the Americans than for the British. If the federation collapsed, then the Americans in Tripolitania would be left to face Beshir and the radical nationalists. According to a British minute that related the American anxiety:

[T]he Americans are uneasy because . . . it is they who would suffer most if there were a breakdown of the Federation since they had put all of their eggs into the Tripolitanian basket. They evidently feel that, if there is a breakdown, we would retire gracefully to Cyrenaica and leave Tripolitania in confusion.⁵⁵

That comment, written shortly after the actual transfer of power, accurately indicated American suspicions before and after Libyan independence.

The two allies were making separate calculations in secret. What the Americans did not know was that the British military planners now regarded the barracks built by the Italians in Tripolitania as more and more attractive because of the expense involved in building new ones in Cyrenaica.⁵⁶ What the British did not know was the projected scope of the American military commitment. Wheelus Field might eventually include seven additional air fields, a United States Navy communications facility, supply and service centers, and five hundred square miles for an amphibious training area for the Army and Marine Corps.⁵⁷ Wheelus Field had the potential of becoming an American military area or "base" in Libya comparable to the British "base" at Suez. It would be lesser in scale but almost as complex. This was a delicate issue. With their historical tradition of anti-colonialism, the Americans were apprehensive that these plans might be misunderstood. Even the existing installation at Wheelus evoked nationalist protest. "We are being accused of being new imperialists who plan to take over all of Libya," Andrew Lynch ruefully reported from Libya.⁵⁸

Adrian Pelt did not know of the magnitude of possible American expenditure until June 1951 (in other words, six months before independence), but from the outset he had assumed that the British and Americans would subsidize the Libyan state in return for strategic facilities. This was the key to the collaborationist relationship. "[I]t appears that Mr. Pelt considers that the

55. Minute by A. G. L. Baxter, 23 Apr. 1952, FO 371/97269.

56. See *ibid.* and other minutes in FO 371/97269.

57. See, e.g., *Foreign Relations* 1951, 5, p. 1363.

58. Lynch to Acheson, 30 Oct. 1951, *ibid.*, p. 1358.

only way in which Libya can become self-supporting is by leasing bases to ourselves, the Americans and the French," were the words of the original British revelation in February 1950. "If these are really Mr. Pelt's views, then we can be much franker with him. . . ." ⁵⁹ That was indeed Pelt's outlook. He often reiterated, for example, that "he would do his best to safeguard our strategic interests in Cyrenaica in the form of a long term lease of bases." ⁶⁰ Pelt also assumed, correctly, that the Americans would be equally interested in bases, and, to their annoyance, fostered the idea among the Libyans that the United States might be prepared to purchase base rights in Tripolitania for huge sums of money. When Andrew Lynch attempted to explain to the Libyans the purpose of the modest amount of aid available through the Point IV program, there was an "obvious lack of interest." ⁶¹ They were much more interested in annual cash payments for base rights. During a visit to Washington in June 1951 Pelt learned that \$1,500,000 would be available annually for economic assistance and that the pending legislation for the mutual security program would greatly ease the problem of the Libyan budget. This was the origin of the United States–Libyan agreement of 1954 that provided \$42 million over the period 1954–1971. The British figure in comparison, as has been stated above, was £2,750,000 per annum, which was about the same as the annual subsidy to Jordan. ⁶²

The falling out of the collaborationists, or nearly so, occurred over the question of Libya and the sterling area. This was one of the principal concerns of the head of the African Department of the Foreign Office when he visited Libya in the spring of 1951, the time when all of the vital issues about the impending transfer of power appeared to be coming to a head. Allen listened to Andrew Lynch pronounce a representative American view when he spoke of "the dead hand of the sterling area." ⁶³ Allen replied in kind by telling Lynch that he was an "imperialist" of a well-known American type who wished to take over the British empire by economic means. ⁶⁴ Pelt despondently observed that the British had persuaded Idris of the virtues of sterling. This was their ace. They were in dead earnest. Britain's status as a world power depended on holding the Middle East, but this position could be

59. See minute by Clutton, 18 Feb. 1950, FO 371/81016.

60. Minute by R. S. Schrivener, 25 Mar. 1950, FO 371/81017.

61. Lyncy to Acheson, 2 June 1951, *Foreign Relations* 1951, 5, p. 1326.

62. The Libyan agreements with Britain and the United States are reproduced in Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, apps. IV and V.

63. Memorandum by Allen, 9 May 1951, FO 371/90386.

64. These were accusations that by no means ended at the time of Libyan independence. Allen wrote later that Lynch continued to be "bitterly opposed to our financial control over [the] Libyan economy." Allen told him in reply that he could only be described as "an unashamed imperialist." Memorandum by Allen, 17 Apr. 1952, FO 371/97267.

sustained only by economic recovery, and this in turn meant the protection of the sterling area. The British therefore put the screws on Idris, who made it clear to the Americans, the United Nations, and not least the French, that Libya would join the sterling area. This was the context in which Allen made the comment, quoted above, that if Pelt attempted to block Libya’s entry into the sterling area then the British would “run him down.”

“Nobody besides ourselves wishes to support the Libyan budget,” Allen wrote, “except the Egyptians.”⁶⁵ That was the somewhat disingenuous justification. It was received with varying degrees of skepticism. Pelt, for example, was also wary of the Egyptians, but he warned the British that their attempt to control the Libyan budget—to provide “the money and the advice on how it is to be spent”—was exceedingly unwise. It would be denounced in the United Nations and elsewhere “as the thinly disguised form of economic imperialism.”⁶⁶ It was precisely the British method that fired Beshir Saadawi’s imagination and rhetoric about “economic imperialism.” By the spring of 1951 the British judged Beshir’s anti-imperialism to be a danger not only in Tripolitania, the most populous and relatively prosperous of the three provinces, but also to the future Libyan state itself. Here was a classic case of the British confronting extremist opposition during the time of an impending transfer of power.

In July 1950, as will be recalled, Beshir had declared his support for a federal state under Idris as ruler. This was a reversal of his previous position. Might it be a plot for a future coup from within? Or was it mere opportunism? In any case in December, after a visit to Egypt, Beshir again reversed himself. Now he proclaimed himself once more in favor of a unitary form of government, according to a secret British report, as “demanded by his Egyptian paymasters.” He organized anti-British and anti-American demonstrations, two of which interfered with the inauguration of the provisional government in March 1951. He subsidized two Arabic newspapers that were violently antifederal and anti-British. The British accepted the following figures as the sources of Beshir’s “nefarious activities” in 1949–1950:

Egyptian Foreign Office	£13,000
Arab League Secretariat	£10,000
Syrian Government	£ 4,000
Lebanon Government	£ 3,000
Saudi Arabian Government	£30,000

In January 1951 he was understood to have received an additional £120,000

65. Memorandum by Allen, 2 July 1951, FO 371/90364.
66. Ibid.

from the Egyptian government for “propaganda purposes.”⁶⁷ Beshir lived well. He had three automobiles in Tripoli, an extravagance that did not go unnoticed by his fellow nationalists. Though he was himself a Tripolitanian nationalist, he carried a Saudi Arabian passport. Technically he was vulnerable. The question for the British was whether to take action against him.

The African Department balked at the idea of an outright cash bribe to buy off Beshir. There was the alternative of finding him a lucrative position in the administration, but whether he could be permanently silenced by a sinecure was open to question. Michael Stewart believed he was too volatile a personality who, moreover, possessed “genuine ability as a political agitator and rabble-rouser.” In Stewart’s view he could probably be “neutralised” only by expulsion. To do so the British would need the excuse of “a more or less serious breach of the peace,” which could be “artificially contrived or at least fostered by the administration.”⁶⁸ The debate about such tactics reached the highest levels of the Foreign Office. Kenneth Younger wrote: “One is very tempted to suggest that the best way to get rid of Beshir would be that he should die from natural causes! This is, however probably either impracticable or too dangerous a peace-time precedent to be attempted!”⁶⁹ Younger favored expulsion. Herbert Morrison was now foreign secretary. He noted “I agree” and cautioned that “we should do it thoroughly while we are about it.”⁷⁰

The British did not in fact find a favorable enough opportunity to expel Beshir, and thus the Labour government in its last months adhered to a policy of nonintervention almost despite itself. Adrian Pelt is on record as having told the British that he would oppose the expulsion of Beshir.⁷¹ Throughout the years 1950–1951 he was a restraining influence and, in retrospect, probably a wise one. From the beginning he urged the British to have more confidence in the political ingenuity of the Libyans themselves to find their own solutions and to interfere as little as possible. In the case of Beshir he undoubtedly gave sound advice. In 1952 King Idris himself expelled Beshir.

As the date of Libyan independence approached, the British went through what might fairly be described as a case of the political jitters. It was brought about in part by the assassination of King Abdullah in July 1951. General Sir Brian Robertson, the commander of British forces in the Middle East, visited

67. Memorandum by T. R. Blackley (Resident in Tripoli) entitled “The Personal History of Beshir Bey Saadawi,” 7 May 1951, FO 371/90386.

68. Memorandum by Stewart, 26 Apr. 1951, FO 371/90385.

69. Minute by Younger, 27 Apr. 1951, FO 371/90385.

70. Minutes by Morrison and Barclay (recording Morrison’s instruction), 1 May 1951, FO 371/90385.

71. Memorandum by Stewart, 26 Apr. 1951, FO 371/90385.

Libya shortly after the murder. He felt compelled to report his “serious anxiety” to London. His judgment of Idris was hardly reassuring:

The weakness of the Amir and his [provisional] Government is our greatest source of trouble. Quite frankly the Amir is a coward. He knows that the Arab League and the Egyptians would like to see him eliminated. . . . Now that King Abdullah has been assassinated, he feels that he will be the next and he is terrified.⁷²

The head of the African Department did not entirely agree with that alarmist assessment. Allen admitted that Idris was “a great weakness” in the plan for “independence” but that there was nothing to do but to hope for the best. His comment provides the most illuminating British assessment of Idris in the last months before independence:

It is perhaps not quite fair to describe him simply as a coward. He is a holy man, and of a quietist sect at that, turned politician. He has a certain natural shrewdness and caution. He is friendly to us and committed in every way that he can be committed on our side. But he is not courageous physically or I should say morally, he is not a commanding personality, he does not really want to be a King, he is an elderly man in poor health, and he has no obvious heir. But the plain fact is that there is no other person who can be head of the future State, and therefore we must deal with the Amir and make the best of him too.⁷³

Allen had to confess that he shared Robertson’s anxiety. “[T]he future of Libya,” Allen wrote, “is in my view balanced on a knife edge.”⁷⁴

Idris proclaimed Libyan independence on 24 December 1951. The British remained unobtrusively in the background. There was a real transfer of power in the sense of the creation of a sovereign state, but in the sense of “independence,” at least to the British, things would remain much the same. According to a Foreign Office minute, “we know that the Libyan Prime Minister expects to receive in the future precisely the same services from us that Tripolitania and Cyrenaica have received in the past.”⁷⁵ The goal of British policy, Roger Allen had written in early December, would now be to make sure that “the future Libyan Government is well advised, principally by British advisers in the key posts, and supported by British funds.”⁷⁶ Rather than describing the new state as the child of the United Nations, which is its traditional epithet, it

72. Extract from a letter by Robertson, 27 July 1951, FO 371/90346.

73. Minute by Allen, 11 Aug. 1951, FO 371/90346.

74. Ibid.

75. Minute by General R. G. Lewis, 10 Oct. 1951, FO 371/90394.

76. Minute by Allen, 7 Dec. 1951, FO 371/90350.

would probably be more appropriate to regard it as a puppet of the British Labour government. At least that was the aim as it was inherited by the Conservatives when they returned to power in the autumn of 1951. It was Anthony Eden, now again foreign secretary, who had helped with the genesis of the new state by his wartime pledge to the Senusis some ten years earlier. He now presided over the creation of an artifice not entirely to his liking. He would have preferred a Cyrenaican rather than a Libyan state. But as he surveyed the work of the officials of the African Department, he marveled at the way they had "played their hand skilfully and patiently." "Personally," he wrote, he would have felt "safer" if the arrangements had been limited to Cyrenaica. "However we are now embarked on wider deserts. Let us hope that all will yet be well."⁷⁷

Among the immediate architects of the new state, it was the head of the African Department who perhaps best expressed the significance in terms of British self-interest. Here was a country, Allen wrote, that was being given its independence "long before it is ready for it." There was the complication of the United Nations "with its impractical doctrinaire idealism." Over those elements in the situation the British had no control. They could only make the best of them. It could be, Allen continued, "that nationalism, xenophobia and the intrigues of our enemies will get their way, and that the country will in effect lapse into chaos. . . ." On the other hand—the other side of the knife edge—the British had always recognized the danger of chaos and had attempted to guard against it by making sure that Libya, despite the United Nations, would "be kept to some extent under our tutelage and that we should be able to make of her, if not an entirely satisfactory independent country, at least a reasonably stable and orderly one. . . ."⁷⁸

Measuring the meaning of "independence" against those aims, the actual date held little significance. For the British it was the continuity in Libyan collaboration and the stability of the new state that would be the test. Looking back nearly a year after the date of independence, Allen could thus reflect that at least the situation had not deteriorated. The new state had not collapsed, nor had it fallen under the influence of Britain's enemies, nor were things entirely satisfactory: "There is no drastic or complete solution for the Libyan problem, and we must therefore resign ourselves to a long period of patchwork. We shall just have to go on doing our best to keep Libya afloat and well-disposed to us."⁷⁹

Had the descendants of the fabulous artificers of the last continent reached

77. Minute by Eden, 9 Dec. 1951, FO 371/90359.

78. Minute by Allen, 11 Aug. 1951, FO 371/90346.

79. Minute by Allen, 21 Nov. 1953, FO 371/103038.

their last desert, only to be reduced to a policy of improvisation and patchwork? Or did the patchwork reflect ingenious improvisation in response to the exigencies of ever-changing combinations of international, metropolitan, and Middle Eastern or African circumstances? If Libya may be regarded as a case study in the transfer of power in Africa as well as the Middle East, it would appear that the latter-day British imperialists were merely reverting to more informal methods in order to achieve traditional aims.

7. *The Transfer of Power in the Sudan*

M. W. DALY

There is a superficial symmetry to the twentieth-century history of the Sudan. The period of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium encompassed the nominal partnership but actual rivalry of two imperialisms, British and Egyptian; an epochal struggle between two rival sects and their leaders, the Khatmiyya *tariqa* of Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani and the Ansar of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi; a consequent political rift between supporters of the Unity of the Nile Valley and the partisans of the "Sudan for the Sudanese"; and the exacerbation of the historic distinctions between the northern Sudan and the south. All of these developments occurred against a background of socio-economic change; all had their roots in the pre-colonial period; all have continued to affect the political evolution of the Sudan to the present day. From a long view, the completion of the "transfer of power" on 1 January 1956 was of mainly symbolic importance, occurring between two more significant landmarks, the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 12 February 1953 and the military takeover of 17 November 1958. Independence itself was not so much the culminating achievement of a nationalist movement as it was a formal punctuation of a continuing phase in Sudanese political development that has not yet come to an end.

The Sudanese nationalist movement achieved a semblance of mass participation only on the eve of independence. Before then it was the vehicle exclusively of a small, mainly urban elite. The earliest expressions of nationalist sentiment may be traced to the aftermath of the First World War when Egyptian and other external influences combined with a growing political awareness to create a number of small political groupings, most notably the White Flag League, which was founded in 1923. These associations were

secular and intertribal, and therein lie both their significance in nationalist mythology and the reasons for their complete failure. Indeed, during the watershed year of 1924 these early patriots were opposed not only by the British but also by the whole range of conservative Sudanese authority, tribal and religious. In the wake of the 1924 disturbances, which culminated in the assassination in Cairo of the British governor-general of the Sudan, and the subsequent British-enforced evacuation of the Egyptian Army, militant opposition of the White Flag type disappeared.¹

More important than the crushing of this "radical" opposition was the accompanying and subsequent suppression of a more "moderate" brand of Sudanese political opinion. This, represented by some members of the new Western-educated class, had seen in Anglo-Egyptian rivalry an advantage for the Sudanese and looked toward a timetable for eventual independence. In the event, the British coup of 1924 tarred these moderates with the brush of radicalism and ushered in a decade of rampant reaction.

While the period 1925–1936 was important in the development of later party policies, it (like 1924) may be given undue significance in attempts to trace the intellectual origins of Sudanese nationalism. Still waters do not always run deep. The quiescence of the educated class (or the intelligentsia, as the British called them) before the signing of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty may not reflect much more than the reality of their impotence to influence events and the preeminence of the sectarian leaders and their "traditional" politics. The generation of politicians who were to preside over the transfer of power were nurtured during this period; but little suggests that before 1936 they, many of whom came from old and prominent families, had acquired either a nationalist outlook or any popular support for political action.

The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty ironically affected the Sudan most by virtually ignoring it. A decade and a half after the world had recognized the independence of Arabian *shaykhs*, the British and Egyptians apparently considered the Sudanese too immature to consult about their own future. Thus the treaty was seen as insulting, its wording in reference to the Sudan as condescending, its authors as concerned solely with their own interests.² A

1. For details and interpretations of 1924 see G. M. A. Bakheit, "British Administration and Sudanese Nationalism, 1919–1939," Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1965; Abd al-Karim al-Sa'id, *Al-liwa' al-abyad* (Khartoum, 1970); M. W. Daly, *British Administration and the Northern Sudan, 1917–1924* (Leiden, 1980); and *idem.*, *Empire on the Nile* (Cambridge, England, 1986).

2. For Anglo-Egyptian relations to 1924 see Gabriel R. Warburg, "The Sudan in Anglo-Egyptian Relations: 1899–1924," in *idem.*, *Egypt and the Sudan: Studies in History and Politics* (London, 1985); for relations generally, John Marlowe, *A History of Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 1800–1956* (London, 1965); for the 1936 treaty, Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, *The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty* (Khartoum, 1976); and for the Sudanese reaction to it, and the formation of the Graduates' General Congress, Bakheit, "British Administration."

genuine bitterness and humiliation found expression in the establishment in 1938 of the Graduates' General Congress. Ostensibly only a social organization of school graduates, it was inevitably much more than that in a society where the educated class was small and where, moreover, it was concentrated in one occupation—government service. That the grim decade after 1924 (viewed by British administrators, until the world depression struck, as one of calm progress) had produced little political activism may be discerned in the fact that the congress was established with British encouragement, and was seen by the government as a possible counter to the sectarian leaders and to Egyptian influence.

It is in fact to sectarianism that we must look for the constant theme that illuminates the political development of the Sudan during the Condominium and after. The preeminence of the leaders of popular Islam was not an innovation born of the imperialists' need for collaborators; rather, it represented the crystallization of an old northern-Sudanese tradition of combined religious and political leadership. In this century the most important, but by no means the only, standard-bearer of this tradition has been the Khatmiyya *tariqa* led by the Mirghani family, whose fortunes so ebbed and flowed with those of the old Turco-Egyptian regime: the politics of collaboration have long roots in the Sudan. Opposed to the Khatmiyya, as indeed in theory to all the *tariqas*, was the Mahdi, Muhammad Ahmad, many of the characteristics of whose appeal nonetheless conformed closely to Sudanese tradition. Despite the devastating defeat of Mahdism in 1898 and the subsequent efforts of the new Condominium regime to suppress it, the cult survived. At the outbreak of the First World War the British, fearing local sympathy for the Ottoman *jihad*, moved to conciliate the Mahdists by co-opting their leader, the Mahdi's son, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman.³

Through tireless maneuvering, Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi was able by 1924 to emerge as the only rival to the Khatmiyya chief, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, whose personality and convictions prevented him from openly competing in the field of collaborative politics. British fears that Abd al-Rahman was growing too powerful were repeatedly balanced by clear examples of his utility to the regime. By the mid-1930s it could fairly be observed that the sayyid was the most important figure in Sudanese politics, and that his relations with the

3. For Mahdism during the early Condominium, see Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate* (London, 1971); Bakheit, "British Administration"; and Daly, *British Administration*. For its political development and the Ansar-Khatmiyya rivalry, see Warburg, "From Ansar to Umma; Sectarian Politics in the Sudan, 1914–1946," in *African and Asian Studies* 9, 3 (1973); for the Khatmiyya, J. O. Voll, "A History of the Khatmiyyah Tariqah in the Sudan," Harvard Ph.D. diss., 1969, remains the only attempt at a comprehensive study. Neither the Mirghani family archives nor the papers of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi have yet been accessible.

government were a pillar of its stability. The rapid progress of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman to the pinnacle of public life was viewed with apprehension and disgust by his great dynastic rival the Mirghani, and their competition is a theme, at times exasperating and even comical, of the interwar period. Yet this rivalry was the heart of Sudanese politics and was far more important than nationalist ideology or mass opposition to the regime in determining the timing and circumstances of Sudanese independence.

If leading Sudanese saw the relations between the co-domini (and indeed the Sudan Government itself) as only a powerful factor in a sectarian struggle, so from London the Sudan was usually but a "question" in Anglo-Egyptian relations. This was an outlook often shared by British officials in Cairo but deeply resented by their colleagues in Khartoum. Throughout the life of the Condominium these opposing worldviews affected Sudanese politics because the Sudan Government constantly felt constrained by London's presumed (and often obvious) preoccupation with Egyptian affairs. As long as control of the Suez Canal and of the Upper Nile was assured, the primacy of Egyptian policy was only irritating or depressing to Khartoum, not a threat to the continuation of British rule there. After Egypt's nominal independence in 1922, and still more so as the British evacuation of Egypt was mooted after World War II, Khartoum viewed as a real possibility London's "sellout" of the Sudan in order to protect British strategic interests in the Middle East generally. The Sudan Government therefore found it necessary increasingly to argue that in maintaining its rule, in excluding Egyptian participation in it, and indeed in all of its acts it enjoyed the enthusiastic support of a large majority of the Sudanese. Thus did the British and Egyptians come to compete for the hearts and minds of the Sudanese, their nominal wards, a competition in which Egypt had the enormous advantages of common language, religion, and culture, but in which the British were able to maintain an edge because of the historical Sudanese mistrust of Egypt, a general recognition of the benefits of British rule, and the perception, occasionally shaken by London, that the British were in the Sudan to stay.

Political developments during the Second World War were necessarily influenced by preoccupation with the military situation in East and North Africa. The Graduates' General Congress at first enjoyed good relations with the government, but the congress's essential artificiality, and its weakness as a political instrument without a reservoir of popular support, soon led to its demise as an independent body. By extending the scope of its activities and pronouncements into the political sphere it encountered the ire of the government; and in 1940 the congress elections were swept by the Ansar, which led the government into closer collaboration with the very power the congress had been expected to curb. In 1942, however, under pressure from an emerg-

ing alliance of secular activists led by Ismail al-Azhari and calling themselves the Ashiqqa (blood brothers), the congress issued a call for far-reaching political advances, including ultimately self-determination, to be implemented immediately after the war. The government, however, in the person of a not unsympathetic civil secretary, Douglas Newbold, rejected these demands out of hand and broke off official relations with the congress.⁴

Spurned by Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, whose relations with the government were enhanced and solidified by the rupture with the congress, the Ashiqqa gained the qualified backing of the Khatmiyya, looked for support to Egypt, and called for the unity of the Nile Valley, thus establishing, with occasional modifications, the array of political forces for the next decade. This was the “double paradox of Sudanese nationalism: the ‘progressive’, politically ambitious ‘Abd al-Rahmān demanding ‘the Sudan for the Sudanese’, but denounced by the militants as ‘the tail of the imperialists’; while these very militants, with the support of the conservative and reluctantly ‘political’ ‘Alī al Mīrghani [were] apparently committed to a programme short of full independence.”⁵ The formation of the first political parties was therefore largely a formal extension of sectarianism into the realm of “modern” politics, the Ashiqqa being usually associated with the Khatmiyya, dependent upon it for support, and taking up the cry of union with Egypt; and the Umma party, established in 1945, even more closely identified as the political expression of the Ansar and the vehicle of Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi’s much-discussed personal ambition to lead a fully independent Sudan. The establishment in 1944 of an Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan, boycotted by the Ashiqqa and the Khatmiyya and therefore dominated by the Mahdists further bound Abd al-Rahman’s cause with the government, a potentially dangerous alliance that limited the government’s room to maneuver and labeled the sayyid as the willing tool of the British. As Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani told the civil secretary in May 1945, he supported the Ashiqqa “because they were anti-Sayed Abdel Rahman, not because they wanted union with Egypt.”⁶

4. For a survey see P. M. Holt and M. W. Daly, *The History of the Sudan*, 3d ed. (London, 1979), pp. 146–49; for details (and much else), K. D. D. Henderson, *The Making of the Modern Sudan: the life and letters of Sir Douglas Newbold* (London, 1953); and for the development of party politics and the career of Ismail al-Azhari, Warburg, *Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: The Case of Sudan* (London, 1978). A study of the political developments of the late Condominium is Peter Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism* (London, 1979).

5. G. N. Sanderson, “Sudanese Nationalism and the Independence of the Sudan,” in Michael Brett, ed., *Northern Africa: Islam and Modernization* (London, 1973), p. 103. This is a significant analysis.

6. Robertson to all governors, 14 Apr. 1946, Robertson Papers, Sudan Archive, University of Durham (SAD).

With the end of the war the "Sudan question" re-emerged as a central issue in Anglo-Egyptian relations. In 1946 it appeared that the impasse would at last be broken when, in the Sidky-Bevin Protocol, Britain agreed to recognize Egyptian sovereignty in the Sudan. To the British Sudan Political Service this constituted the sellout that had long been feared. The governor-general threatened to resign, London beat a hasty retreat, and negotiations with Egypt collapsed. But the message was lost to no one, least of all to the Sudanese, that the rhetoric of the British in Khartoum might not always be matched by the actions of the British in London. Derided by the unionists, the Sudan Government became even more reliant on the collaboration of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, to whom, moreover, the protocol had been a particularly unpleasant shock. To Sir James Robertson he confided that he "knew he could deal with the Ashigga [*sic*], he thought he could deal with Egypt, but the Sudan Government and His Majesty's Government were too much for him."⁷

The Advisory Council was superseded in 1948 by a Legislative Assembly drawing its elected and appointed members from all regions, including the south. The Ashiqqa and Khatmiyya boycotted this body which, while already restricted in its powers, was therefore not fully representative. The position of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman and the Umma party was enhanced, and the British were forced to fall back upon nominated "tribal members" to counter Mahdist pressure for a speedier drive toward independence. Government efforts to entice Khatmiyya participation failed. Abd al-Rahman seemed closer than ever to victory, and with rumors rife of his imminent kingship he was able to threaten the government with the loss of his support.⁸ In December 1950 the Legislative Assembly adopted, by one vote, an Umma motion calling for self-government in 1951, which, however, the governor-general refused to concede.⁹

In October 1951 the Egyptian government, on its last legs, unilaterally abrogated both the 1936 treaty and the 1899 Condominium Agreement with Britain. Although this subsequently diminished Egypt's ability to intervene in the Sudan's affairs, it brought into question the whole legal basis of the Sudan Government. It could not save the tottering Egyptian monarchy. In October the revolutionary regime in Egypt abandoned the Egyptian claim to sovereignty, calling the bluff of the British who had long supported the Sudanese "right to self-determination." The Sudanese political parties quickly struck a deal with the Egyptians, and the British, bereft of effective collab-

7. Robertson to all governors, 8 Oct. 1946, *ibid.*

8. See, e.g., Robertson to all governors, 6 Jan. 1949, *ibid.*

9. Robertson wrote that "the narrowness of the majority" absolved the governor-general "from taking any action on the vote." (To all governors, 4 Jan. 1951, *ibid.*)

orators, were forced to come to terms. In February 1953 an Anglo-Egyptian Agreement called for elections to a Sudanese parliament and an elaborate timetable by which power would be transferred and the Sudanese themselves would determine the question of union or independence. In parliamentary elections the unionists under Ismail al-Azhari emerged victorious, the electorate apparently registering hostility not so much to the Umma's platform of complete independence as to its tactics and its domination by Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi.¹⁰

That union did not take place was the result of decisions reached largely outside the new governmental institutions. The Ansar would never accept union with Egypt, and this they demonstrated massively and violently in March 1954; the Khatmiyya's attachment to the unionist cause had always been lukewarm at best, a fact confirmed in December of the same year when the *tariqa* encouraged the establishment, from among anti-Azhari unionists, of the Republican Independence party, which favored only alliance with Egypt. Indeed, the fervor of some unionist politicians, even Azhari himself, had been largely tactical. Certain policies and acts of the new Egyptian government also caused a diminution of interest in a concept that had in the Sudan, though not in Egypt, always been vague and symbolic. The general erosion of the unionist position broke its already weak ideological cohesion, while the imminence of self-determination precipitated rifts in the parliamentary ranks, as individuals scurried for precedence. In June 1955 Azhari and Muhammad Nur al-Din fought openly for control of the unionist coalition, further weakening it.

With the major issue of self-determination in effect already decided, and with his personal position steadily eroding, Azhari moved to circumvent procedures laid down in the 1953 Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. Early in December 1955, in an extraordinary public display of cooperation, the two sayyids met and issued a call for the formation of a coalition government directly after independence. Arrangements for a plebiscite were abandoned, and Parliament unanimously voted to declare the Sudan's independence. A transitional constitution was adopted on 31 December, and on 1 January the flags of Britain and Egypt, the last vestiges of Condominium rule, were hauled down.

The curious atmosphere of anticlimax that attended the final independence of the Sudan has been remarked¹¹ in order to illustrate the fact that the disappearance of the co-dominion and even of the British governor-general himself, whose office had retained great prestige, did not resolve the struggle

10. For this and subsequent elections see Peter K. Bechtold, *Politics in the Sudan* (New York, 1976).

11. Sanderson, "Sudanese Nationalism," pp. 108-09.

for control between the two great sectarian leaders. Soon after independence Ismail al-Azhari's decline seemed complete when he was defeated in Parliament and a new government, with the Umma leader, Abdallah Khalil, as prime minister, succeeded with the blessing of the two sayyids. This government remained in office until the coup of November 1958.

Why was power transferred when it was, and who constituted the group to whom it was transferred? The British had mastered very early the politics of collaboration in the Sudan where, to be sure, they had from the beginning ruled with very few officials, a tiny British military force, and, until 1924, the double-edged sword of the Egyptian Army. Their position always depended largely on its general acceptability to one or more of the classes or sections of the population. This tactical support was always forthcoming until 1952, because of the historical enmity of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman and the Ansar for the Egyptians: the British position was secure so long as Egypt maintained its claim to sovereignty in the Sudan. Once that was removed, so was the last trump of the Sudan Government, and it was forced to implement its long-declared policy of ensuring Sudanese self-determination. That aim had been the more acceptable to the Political Service because they viewed it as possible of fulfillment only after decades or even generations of continued British "guidance." As late as 1945 a target date of 1965 was presumed for Sudanese independence, even after which a sustained British role was expected.

The option of remaining in the Sudan by force was not open to the British. To attempt to do so would have destroyed the moral justification for their presence since the 1920s and have led to a crisis with Egypt with grave consequences for British strategic aims, paramount of which was the ensuring of the British position in the eastern Mediterranean. Far better to hand over power to a Sudanese government that (despite public pronouncements) was essentially friendly and ideologically compatible than to risk the emergence of an anti-British mass movement in Egypt and the Sudan, with little hope of a satisfactory outcome. As Robertson rather cynically put it, "Possible civil war in the Sudan in the unknown future and administrative chaos in a few years' time are not likely to weigh as much as the apparent certainty of serious disorders and war conditions [in] the Canal Zone in a week or two's time."¹² In any event, an old saw of the Foreign Office's strategic thinking was that control of the Upper Nile could be invoked to keep Egyptians "reasonable." This Nile card had been played with evident success in 1924–1925; why could it not be held discreetly from Uganda during any future Anglo-Egyptian upsets? Although British officials in Khartoum viewed "concessions" to the Sudanese as the long-awaited "sellout" to Egypt, yet the Foreign Office and

12. To all governors, 8 Feb. 1953, Robertson Papers, SAD.

the Residency, with the U.S. State Department in the background, maintained the position that had predominated throughout the Condominium, that relations with Egypt were more important than the status of the Sudan.

The timing of the transfer was therefore determined by the interplay of the co-domini and the sectarian leaders. The role of the "nationalist movement" was much less significant. Apart from the two main political groupings, the "independents" and the unionists, party activity in the years before independence was restricted to a small elite and was often superficial, ephemeral, and personal. Ideological parties like the Muslim Brotherhood and the Communists failed to achieve mass support, although during the final years of the Condominium an alliance between organized labor and the Communists presented the Sudan Government with its only well-organized and sustained popular opposition. The so-called Socialist Republican party,¹³ established in 1951 by pro-independence tribal leaders opposed to the personal ambitions of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, was much touted by the Sudan Government until the elections of 1953 revealed its lack of support. Although certain individuals like Azhari emerged as political figures in their own right, their lack of popular backing plainly made them vulnerable to the machinations of the sayyids. Having themselves stifled the embryonic moderate secular element after 1924, the British were unable to create or promote useful secular collaboration when they wanted it thereafter, as can be seen so painfully in the record of the Graduates' General Congress, the Advisory Council, and the Legislative Assembly.

At the time of the transfer, the government of the Sudan had already been largely Sudanized; the handover was to a bureaucratic elite that had been the purposeful (if regretted) creation of the British. They were in every sense successors, not supplanters, of the Sudan Political Service. It is not surprising that the transfer itself was quite friendly, as fiery public speeches were (rather embarrassingly) balanced by routine social relations. This was in part the personal achievement of Robertson, the civil secretary during the difficult period 1946–1953.¹⁴ At the pinnacle of a thirty-year career in the Sudan he had come to embody (as had Douglas Newbold and Harold MacMichael) the ethos of the Political Service. Fiercely protective of what he and they saw as the British mission, and genuinely concerned for the Sudanese, he set the tone for the British departure. He had no doubt that they were leaving too soon; he bitterly resented the part that the Foreign Office (and the State Department) played in bringing that about; yet he called upon the service to

13. The circumstances surrounding the founding of the party are still controversial: most writers assert that the British were behind it; a surviving leader has denied it in an interview with the author.

14. For Robertson's account of events, see his *Transition in Africa* (London, 1974).

live up to its reputation and deal professionally with the task at hand. Continuity and maintenance of efficiency were the prescribed dual objectives. Indeed, to what extent Sudanization was an end in itself and not merely an aspect of independence, remains to be assessed. While the political parties overemphasized its importance, the British rather naively acted as if "administration" could and therefore should be separated from politics.

The opposing lines of "union" and "complete independence," and the sectarian differences with which they were identified, do not obscure the fact that few genuine issues divided the main political parties. Group solidarity (which was never achieved) and personal advancement were more important, as Ismail al-Azhari's career of political maneuvering so fully reveals. Sloganeering, championship of the fashionable international issue or economic theory, and love of the perquisites of office came to characterize an increasingly insubstantial political life. Yet there was never a large enough constituency for an ideological party to make its mark, and this resulted in the disaffection of many educated Sudanese and their resort to extremist groups or to defeatism. The Sudanese Communist party, for example, became one of the strongest Communist parties in the region. It is no surprise, then, that the fall of the parliamentary regime in 1958 occasioned hardly a ripple of popular protest, so discredited were the politicians less than three years after independence. Had independence been delayed, it is arguable that the growing strength of the labor movement would have had a greater impact on the transfer of power. Alone among major interest groups, the Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation opposed the 1953 Anglo-Egyptian agreement. In the event, the glib association of some unionist politicians with the socialist views propounded by Sudanese labor was purely opportunistic.

The class of government officials to whom responsibility was handed included almost no southern Sudanese, and therein lay the seeds of future catastrophe as the rush to independence quickened Sudanization. Since the earliest days of the Condominium the south had been viewed as a liability by the Khartoum regime. It was backward, poor, expensive to administer, difficult of access, bewilderingly complicated with its plethora of peoples and languages. The Sudan Government's outlook was mainly Middle Eastern rather than African, the Political Service was dominated by "Arabists," the southern administration was largely contracted out to retired officers who idealized paternalism, not bureaucracy. In the early 1930s separate development was institutionalized as Southern Policy, a vast experiment in indirect rule. The region was to be insulated from the destructive influences of the northern, Arab, Muslim Sudan and to be left to develop according to its own traditional systems, of which a few British officials would act as arbiters. When finally it was officially abandoned after World War II, this cheap policy had

only widened the gap between north and south that would anyway have been a serious impediment to national unity and to the prosperity of the south. The central government's slow awakening to the pace of political development after the war was particularly harmful to the south. In May 1946 Robertson wrote that "if in the next twenty years the Southern Sudan has not progressed far enough to stand on its own feet in the *self-governing* Sudan," some new arrangements would have to be made. In any case, the south would "probably require the assistance of non-Sudanese for a considerable time after the Northern Sudan has dispensed with them,"¹⁵ a supposition that was comforting but unfounded and incorrect.

From the late 1940s, southern chiefs (and their northern counterparts) remained the most loyal allies of the British, whose constant reference to an obligation to safeguard southern interests in future constitutional arrangements should be seen in the light of their hopes of a continuing role in the region. Barred from the Advisory Council, southerners participated in the Legislative Assembly, but British promises of safeguard came to nothing. Sudanization resulted in only a handful of posts—six of some eight hundred—for southerners, and in August 1955 a mutiny of southern troops began the period of civil unrest and war that lasted until 1972. Of the many questions that concern the timing of Sudanese independence, perhaps the most important is to what extent it affected the truly national issue of political, social, and economic integration of the south.

A theme of modern Sudanese historical writing on the Sudan has been the ultimate British intention to amalgamate the southern Sudan with British East Africa. The superficial evidence for this assertion (Southern Policy, central-government neglect, the musings of some British officials) does not withstand a scrutiny of the Sudan Government's records. Yet it remains the case that Sudanese nationalists from the 1930s onward have suspected British intentions, and that the unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan has been one of the few points on which all northern parties have agreed since independence. Just as northern politicians and central governments, whether civilian or military, have consistently blamed the "southern problem" on British imperialism and missionary intrigues, so southerners have tended to see in government policy, however innocuous, a consistent aim to destroy the African identity of the southern peoples and to assimilate them to northern

15. My emphasis. Robertson to all governors, 11 May 1946, SAD. For the south during the Condominium see R. O. Collins, *Land Beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan, 1898–1918* (New Haven and London, 1971), and *idem.*, *Shadows in the Grass: Britain in the Southern Sudan, 1918–1956* (New Haven and London, 1983); for the Condominium and events after independence, Lilian Passmore Sanderson and G. N. Sanderson, *Education, Religion and Politics in Southern Sudan, 1899–1964* (London and Khartoum, 1981).

Sudanese Arabic and Islamic culture. The Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 ended the civil war and brought about a decade of peace and regional autonomy for the south. But since 1983, when the regime of Jaafar Nimeiri proclaimed *Sharia* law throughout the Sudan, a new, southern-based rebellion has arisen, imbued more strongly than its predecessors with the conviction that radical solutions are required to the Sudan's nationality and other problems.

Suspicion of British intentions over the south was so strong after World War II that it is difficult to imagine how the Sudan Government could have gained the support of either northern nationalists or Egypt for steps to "safeguard" the south after independence. The conclusion remains that in 1946, when Southern Policy was finally reversed, either much more than a decade was needed in which to integrate the south or much more political flexibility was required on all sides to reach a federal or other solution. Neither was forthcoming. While northern Sudanese rightly condemn what was at best a short-sighted policy, southerners are entitled to the view that they were abandoned by the British. But the possibility that British imperialism might be used as a shared, unifying symbol has long been precluded by post-independence experience.

In north and south the British ruled paternalistically, with firmness and authority. They never subjected themselves to a parliamentary system. The quality of Sudanese self-government was necessarily different from that sanctioned by half a century of experience. A strong central executive, personified in the governor-generalship with all its historical associations, lapsed, and there was nothing to fill the void, to arbitrate, to accept responsibility, to preside. Thus the relative importance of sectarianism increased, as the politicians failed to acquire the prestige of their British predecessors or the popular support that would have allowed independence of action. Indeed, the irony is that the transfer of power involved the disappearance of the one truly secular component in the Sudanese political equation.

The coup of November 1958 ushered in six years of military rule. In October 1964 the army itself was turned out of power by a popular uprising, and there ensued a series of civilian governments until May 1969, when Colonel Jaafar Nimeiri took power. The Nimeiri regime was overthrown in April 1985, and a year later a parliamentary system was restored. The Sudan has thus experienced the curious phenomenon of two massive popular risings since independence, each more powerful than the nationalist movement of the 1950s, yet each ending with the re-introduction of a system only superficially different from that bequeathed by the British. One may conclude that parliamentary democracy is thus proven to be the system most suited to the Sudan's pressing needs; or one may judge that the conservative forces to whom power

was transferred in the early 1950s have doggedly managed to restore their position. In each period of parliamentary rule the Umma and the heirs to the Ashiqqa have continued to dominate and compete, and after the elections of April 1986 the Sudan's prime minister was al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, grandson of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, while the chairman of the supreme council that functions as the head of state is a scion of the Mirghani family.

The stagnation of Sudanese politics may be seen also in the continuing national crisis epitomized by the rebellion of the south but is more generally exhibited in the disaffection of the peripheral regions from the center. Fundamental questions of nationality, identity, religion, economic development, regional rights, and central responsibilities remain unanswered or even unasked, and there is serious doubt that the present system can accommodate the pluralism with which geography and history have endowed the Sudan. A longer incubation of true devolution during the colonial era might have led to a more suitable system than the hierarchical provincial government inherited from the British.

To what extent the timing of Sudanese independence influenced events elsewhere in Africa is problematical. Certainly the Colonial Office was concerned about the effect that apparent precipitateness there would have, especially in "the more advanced Colonial territories."¹⁶ The Foreign Office was less troubled. But just as the British had come to the Sudan in the 1890s for reasons far beyond the purely local, so the timing of their departure was influenced by their regional and imperial interests. The Sudan's independence in 1956 was probably less a cause of external developments than a result of such, in combination with the unique dynamics of northern-Sudanese politics.

16. Sir John Martin, minute, 16 Dec. 1953, Public Record Office, London, FO 371/96917.

8. *Ghana since Independence*

A D U B O A H E N

From the Western mass media and comments by many historians, economists, and writers, the unmistakable and almost indelible impression has been created that independence or the liberation from colonial rule has brought nothing to Africa but political instability, civil wars, coups and counter-coups, brain drain, corruption, graft, hunger, mounting international debts, runaway inflation, stagnation if not decline of the economy, and the patronage of external philanthropic bodies and international bodies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations and its agencies. All this may be true, but it is surely only just one side, and a very negative and murky side, of the independence record. The other side, which is often ignored, is the more positive one of concrete achievements on all fronts. Indeed, I make bold to state that in practically every independent African country, far more has been done to the benefit of the Africans themselves and far more progress has been achieved during the two decades since independence than was achieved in six or seven decades of colonial rule. In fact, as will be shown here by the example of Ghana during the first decade of its independence, the true verdict that should be passed on independent Africa is not that nothing has been achieved since independence but rather that far more could and should have been achieved and at far less cost than has been the case. And in any case, it is far more natural, consoling, and reassuring for a people to govern themselves even badly than to be governed efficiently by others. This is precisely the meaning of the motto adopted by Kwame Nkrumah, namely, "We prefer self-government with danger to servitude in tranquillity."*

*As will be obvious from the footnotes, this paper has benefited a great deal from the papers

It should be noted from the title of this chapter and the above paragraph that the use of the terms *decolonization* and *transfer of power* have been avoided, and deliberately so. Both terms are highly objectionable, partly because they are Eurocentric and mainly because they are based on certain assumptions that cannot bear close and critical analysis. The assumptions are, first, that the initiative in the whole process of the liquidation of colonial rule from Africa lay with the imperialist powers and, second, that the process was the outcome of a well-thought-out and carefully executed program. Indeed, some modern imperialist historians are not arguing whether a plan existed but rather when the plan was formulated.¹ It is the view of this writer, first, that the initiative lay rather with the Africans themselves and that the imperialist powers acted in response to and in the light of that initiative and, second, that self-government was not a smooth and tranquil process of the transfer of power from the imperialist powers to Africans or the handing over of power on a silver platter to Africans but rather, from the Afrocentric point of view, the successful outcome of protracted struggles sometimes peaceful but often violent and bloody.

In the first place, in no way can or should the terms *decolonization* or *transfer of power* be applied to such colonial powers as France, Portugal, and Belgium. None of them ever thought of eventual independence for their colonies and therefore could not have drawn up and did not draw up any plans for so-called decolonization. All of them were forced out of Africa by a combination of internal and external pressures and not on their own initiative or in accordance with any plans. Britain, on the other hand, had, ever since the Durham Report of 1836, always envisaged ultimate independence for her colonies. However, despite the contentions of recent scholars such as Flint and Pearce—and as Crook has recently shown²—Britain did not draw up any such plans. What she did was to have reacted at every stage to the pressures and changing conditions in each of the colonies. This, surely, is the only rational explanation of the fact that her colonies gained independence at different times.

One of the basic facts often ignored by those scholars who use the terms *transfer of power* and *decolonization* is that independence and self-determin-

that were presented at the symposium on the life and work of Kwame Nkrumah, organized by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon (27 May–1 June 1985). I would like to express my indebtedness to their authors. These papers are still unpublished.

1. J. Flint, "The Failure of Planned Decolonization in British Africa," *African Affairs* 82 (July 1983), and R. Pearce, "The Colonial Office and Planned Decolonization in Africa," *African Affairs* 83 (Jan. 1984).

2. R. Crook, "Decolonization, the Colonial State and Chieftaincy in the Gold Coast," *African Affairs* 85 (1986).

ation have been part of the political vocabulary of Africans since the attainment of independence by Liberia in 1847. In his numerous writings in the 1860s and 1870s,³ Africanus B. Horton, probably the first West African to qualify as a doctor in Britain, persistently urged Britain to transform West Africa "along the British model, economically and socially" and prepare its people "for independence under the leadership of an African educated elite."⁴ In *West African Countries and Peoples*, published as early as 1868, he pointed out that the House of Commons Committee [the Parliamentary Select Committee of 1865] "has now set on foot by resolution (and we hope it will soon be by actual practice) the great principle of establishing independent African nationalities as independent as the present Liberian government," and therefore set himself the task to make "a review of the different colonies, and examine how far they are capable of upholding an independent separate nationality" with a view to facilitating the implementation of the contemplated reform. It has also been amply demonstrated in several chapters of the recently published volume VII of the UNESCO *History of Africa*, which deals with the period 1880 to 1935, that an overwhelming majority of African rulers and leaders did try to defend their sovereignty and independence during the decades of the colonial occupation of Africa. In the first two decades of this century, some of them did rise up in rebellion to overthrow colonialism.

Though it is true that many educated Africans and nationalists did reconcile themselves to colonial rule in the interwar period and merely demanded its reform, there was quite an articulate and powerful minority that clamored for independence, as is evident from some of the editorials and individual letters of some of the newspapers of the period. This radical wing of the anti-colonial movement was particularly strengthened by the impact of Garveyism in Africa. Garvey's call for the overthrow of colonialism and for African emancipation certainly influenced radical anti-colonial activities, not only in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, as has hitherto been contended, but also in Ghana, where branches of his Universal Negro Improvement Association were formed in the 1920s.⁵ A typical editorial of the period reads:

We may not agree with his [Garvey's] methods nor with all that he says: but we do not belong to the class of Africans who praise as the white man praises or condemns as he does. Wherefore we have not found in Mar-

3. Africanus J. B. Horton, *Political Economy of British Western Africa* (London, 1865); *West African Countries and Peoples* (London, 1868); *Letters on the Political Condition of the Gold Coast* (London, 1870).

4. E. A. Ayandele, introduction in Horton, *Letters*, pp. 19–20.

5. J. A. Langley, "Garveyism and African Nationalism," *Race* 11, 2 (1969); R. L. Okonkwo, "The Garvey Movement in British West Africa," *Journal of African History* 21, 1 (1980); A. A. Boahen, "Garveyism in the Gold Coast," unpublished paper.

cus Garvey so much of sin and blot as imputed to him by white men. After all, what is the man's ideal? He stands for the emancipation of his race from alien thralldom which is but the task that leaders have set themselves since the days of Moses, and if there are Africans living who do not cherish the hope that in the course of time there may arise in Africa great and powerful States occupying positions similar to those now held by the European State, then such people are not a valuable asset to the race since they lack the only ideal that matters and are content to continue in their serfdom to the end of time. We must set this ideal before us, to be bequeathed from generation to generation until it is realized in the fulness of time, the ideal that in the course of the centuries Africans will also become absolutely independent and masters in their own household, and so develop ourselves towards that state.⁶

In their writings, lectures, petitions, and memoranda to the Colonial Office in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, nationalists and educated Africans such as Nnamdi Azikiwe in Ghana and Nigeria, Kobina Sekyi in Ghana, and especially Wallace-Johnson in Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone also all vigorously campaigned for the overthrow of colonial rule and for "self-government now."⁷ The campaigns of these nationalists assumed even increased momentum and urgency following the fascist Italian invasion and occupation of Ethiopia in 1935, the impact of the Second World War on African soldiers who fought abroad and their sense of frustration and disappointment on their return home, the impact of the Manchester Pan-African Congress of 1945, and particularly in Ghana, the immediate postwar explosive socio-economic situation caused by the crisis of swollen-shoot disease of cocoa plants and the high cost of goods.

Surely the activities of these radical nationalists could not but influence the formulators of policies in the Colonial Office. What is more significant is the fact that in an article published in January 1986, Richard Crook, after reviewing the recent "pre-revisionist" and "revisionist" literature and controversies on the subject of colonial liberation and of the views of Flint and Pearce in particular, has come to the conclusion that independence in Ghana had nothing to do with any imperial plan for decolonization but was rather the outcome of the activities of the nationalists arising from the dynamics and conflicts of the internal situation in the country in the 1940s. He concludes:

The essentially cautious and fragile nature of the Gold Coast administration meant that, once faced with a united and mass-based opposition to

6. The *Gold Coast Times* editorial quoted in *The Negro World*, 19 Sept. 1925.

7. S. K. Asante on Wallace-Johnson, "Politics of Non-collaboration: The Case of Wallace-Johnson and the Colonial Establishment in Sierra Leone in the 1930s," unpublished paper.

the core of the state's economic basis—its control over the cocoa economy—it quickly accommodated to maintain that base. There is no need to discover an imperial plan for self-government in 1943 or even 1948 to explain this shift. The accommodation, initially intended to reform the chieftaincy, turned into an unceremonious ditching of the NA [Native Administration] system after 1952.⁸

Having shown that there was no “imperial plan for self-government,” it is most surprising that Crook still uses the term *decolonization*. Both from his own arguments and from those advanced here, a more accurate and less Eurocentric term should be used, and the simple one of *independence* or even *liberation* should do. Having disposed of these general issues, we turn to the central question of what Ghana made of her independence during the first decade.

The story of Ghana during its first decade of independence is primarily the story of a single individual, Kwame Nkrumah, its first leader of government business, its first prime minister and then president. Properly and realistically to assess his performance we must analyze the nature of the legacy that he inherited from colonialism. Probably Ghana inherited a more enviable legacy than any other state in Africa at the time of independence. Kwame Nkrumah and his party, the Convention People's party (CPP), inherited at the time of independence on 6 March 1957 a relatively rich country, with foreign reserves amounting to about two hundred million pounds sterling and a foreign debt of only twenty million, a fairly good infrastructure, one of the best trained and Africanized civil services in Africa, and an enormous economic potential in the form of minerals and fertile soil. But equally significant was the negative aspect of that legacy. This included lack of national integration or identity, inadequate and unevenly distributed social facilities, the colonial or neocolonial nature of the civil, military, and administrative structures, and the semifederal or regional bias of the independent constitution. Even more serious were a mono-crop economy, lack of industrialization, a negative external-trade balance, and the domination of both the internal and external economy by expatriate firms, companies, and oligopolies. Besides this legacy, Ghana faced the problems of any new independent country—those of winning international recognition, formulating a clear foreign policy, and acquiring a niche in the international world. Above all, it had to fulfill the high expectations of its newly liberated people. How then did independent Ghana tackle these numerous and complicated problems, and with what success, during its first decade?

The history of Ghana during this period falls into two clear phases, from

8. Crook, “Decolonization,” p. 103.

March 1957 to July 1960 and from July 1960 to February 1966. This division marks a fundamental change both in approach on the part of Nkrumah—from one of pragmatism to one governed by the ideology of socialism—and in the order of his priorities. One of the most immediate concerns of Nkrumah during the first three years of independence was to deal with the acute political situation in the country. Political conditions in Ghana at the time of independence were far from stable, and the Nkrumah government was not in firm control of the situation. The last three years of the struggle for independence had been marked by a bitter political rivalry between Nkrumah's CPP and the opposition group made up of the National Liberation Movement (NLM) and its allies, namely, the Northern People's party (NPP), the Moslem Association party (MAP), the Togoland Congress, and the Federal Youth Organization, which were demanding a federal constitution for the state. Moreover, though Nkrumah's party won 72 out of the 104 seats in the final election of 1956, it actually polled a total of 398,141 votes as compared with 299,116 votes polled by the opposition parties.⁹ It was also clear from the voting figures that the CPP had a tenuous hold on four out of the nine regions of the country, namely, the Asante, Volta, Northern, and Upper regions. The southern part of the Volta region was in fact in open revolt and on the verge of secession by March 1957, while the political tension in the Accra region resulted in the formation of the Ga Shifimokpee (Ga Standfast Association) in July 1957.

In the light of these conditions, Nkrumah introduced a number of political measures.¹⁰ He suspended the pro-NLM Kumasi City Council and declared a state of emergency in Kumasi in January 1958. The Deportation Act, passed in July 1957, was invoked to deport a number of anti-CPP aliens in Kumasi, including two Nigerians and some Lebanese and Syrians. Nkrumah appointed political regional commissioners in place of the colonial regional commissioners; he created the new Bron-Ahafo region out of the Asante region of the colonial period, and he abolished the regional councils set up under the independence constitution. He elevated pro-CPP chiefs to the status of *amanhene*, or paramount chiefs, especially in the Asante and Volta regions. With control of the legislature, he secured the passage of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act and the Preventive Detention Act in November 1957 and July 1958, respectively. The former act banned all the existing opposition parties, which compelled them to unite into the United Party (UP) soon thereafter, and under the latter act a number of opposition politicians and activists were detained for a period of five years. Though most of these mea-

9. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, 1975), pp. 186–92.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 192–94

asures were harsh and struck fear into the hearts of many Ghanaians, the measures did succeed in sustaining the newly independent state as a unitary rather than a federal state (a unity maintained ever since), in endowing the country with a single opposition party, in consolidating the position of Nkrumah's government, and in ensuring peace and stability in the country.

To meet the great expectations of his people, and to deal with the economic aspects of the colonial legacy, Nkrumah continued the economic and social measures that he had initiated in pre-independence days. The surprising fact about his approach in the economic sphere during the first phase was its extreme caution and pragmatism. Nkrumah had as early as the 1940s declared himself a Marxist socialist, and the 1949 constitution of his party had declared one of its aims to be the establishment of a "socialist state in which all men and women shall have equal opportunity and where there shall be no capitalist exploitation."¹¹ Contrary to all expectations and in spite of the pressure of his backbenchers and party activists to end the expatriate and capitalist stranglehold on the economy, Nkrumah initially more or less maintained the colonialist nature of the economy and continued the pro-capitalist and laissez-faire policies of pre-independence days. No attempts at nationalization or imposition of controls were made. Throughout the period the Syrians and Lebanese (whose number in the country in fact increased) continued to dominate the retail trade, while the expatriate firms dominated the export and import trade and the mining industry. Though a vigorous policy of industrialization was pursued, and by 1959 there were seventeen industries operating under the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), nearly all the new industries that were set up were owned by Syrians and Lebanese firms. Moreover, between 1957 and 1960, Nkrumah sought to attract more capital from capitalist countries by introducing certain incentives. These included the reduction of company tax from 45 percent to 40 percent, the granting of tax relief to new industries, and the exemption from customs duties of raw and semiprocessed materials for manufacturing. Ghana's external trade also continued to be mainly with the Western capitalist countries, and little effort was made to trade with the socialist bloc. By 1958 only 0.4 percent of Ghana's total exports went to the U.S.S.R., while by 1960 only 4.3 percent of Ghana's imports came from the socialist countries.¹²

Only in three areas—cocoa buying, banking, and insurance—were any noticeable changes introduced. The Ghana's Farmers' Marketing Co-oper-

11. Panaf, *Kwame Nkrumah* (London, 1973).

12. Kwesi Jonah, "Ghana under Nkrumah: The Struggle against Neo-colonial Trade Patterns," paper presented at the symposium on the life and work of Kwame Nkrumah, organized by the Institute of African Studies, 21 May–1 June 1985 (to be cited henceforth as the Nkrumah symposium).

ative and the Ghana Co-operative Marketing Association were established to challenge the expatriate firms in the field of cocoa purchasing, and by the end of the period under review all the expatriate firms had voluntarily abandoned that field. The Bank of Ghana was established as the central bank in the year of independence. The Ghana Commercial Bank, opened in 1952, had by 1960 ended the monopoly enjoyed by the two expatriate banks of Barclays and the British Bank of West Africa, by controlling about 40 percent of the total deposits and 50 percent of all credit business in the country. In the field of insurance, two new companies, the National Development Company (NADECO) and the Ghana Co-operative Insurance Company, were set up by Nkrumah and the United Farmers' Council in 1958 and 1960 respectively, but they had failed to break the monopoly of the expatriate insurance companies by the end of the period.

The results of this laissez-faire policy were truly astonishing. The shops of the country became filled with imported goods of all kinds, from industrial machines and drugs to luxuries such as caviar and champagne, employment figures shot up, and the standard of living of the average Ghanaian rose. It was certainly great to be alive in those days, and it looked as if independence was bearing fruit. But the negative results were indeed disastrous. In the first place, the stranglehold of foreign companies on the economy became intensified, and the huge profits that were made went to them rather than to Ghanaians. Second, while export earnings rose only marginally from £110 million in 1958 to £122 million in 1961, the cost of imports increased from £95 million to £165 million.¹³ The budget deficit also rose from £8 million in 1959 to £29 million in 1961. Worst of all, as a result of the open-door policy, more capital in the form of profits was taken out of the country than was brought in, with the capital deficit estimated at £7 million annually between 1958 and 1960.¹⁴ All this, together with the steady decline of the world cocoa price, led to a sharp deterioration in the country's foreign-exchange position. Obviously the policy had to be changed, and it was.

If the performance of the Nkrumah government in the economic field was not beneficial to the country in the long run, his record in the provision of social and public services was impeccable. This is borne out by the fact that in the First Development Plan and the Consolidated Plan covering the period from 1957 to 1959 as much as 86 percent of the estimated investment was allocated to these services. The social services included education, community development, health, and nursing, and the public services included elec-

13. S. Asamoah Darko, "The Development and Patterns of Manufacturing Industries in Ghana: 1951-1965," the Nkrumah symposium.

14. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, p. 200.

tricity, water and communications. To no other area did Nkrumah devote such concentrated attention as to education. He continued with renewed vigor and urgency the excellent measures that he had introduced since 1951, which included fee-free primary education and the extension of educational facilities to all parts of the country. Thus, the number of primary schools increased from 3,571 in 1957 to 3,713 in 1959, that of middle schools from 1,311 to 1,394, that of government-approved secondary schools from 38 in 1957 to 59 in 1960 (most of which were built by the Ghana Educational Trust set up by Nkrumah), and that of private secondary schools from 22 to 51.¹⁵ Even more revealing are the enrollment figures. The number of children in primary schools rose from 421,020 in 1958 to 503,155 in 1960, in middle schools from 139,801 to 161,177, in secondary schools from 13,196 to 16,112, and the number of students in teacher-training colleges from 4,055 to 4,427.¹⁶ At the higher-education level, increased resources were assigned to the two existing university colleges, the University College of Gold Coast (est. 1948) and the Kumasi College of Science and Technology (est. 1952), and moves were initiated that led to the attainment of full university status by the two institutions in 1961. The total enrollment in the two tuition-free universities increased from 960 in 1958 to 1,103 in 1960.

During this period Nkrumah turned his attention also to the promotion of research in science and technology and set up for this reason the National Research Council in 1958 and the Ghana Academy of Learning (changed to the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences) in 1959.¹⁷ For the training of more scientists and other specialists, the government continued to award scholarships for Ghanaians to study overseas. The plan for mass literacy and mass education launched in 1951 "to liquidate illiteracy from the country in the shortest possible time" and "to teach people, not merely how to read and write, but how to live," was also vigorously pursued during this period through the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development. This department launched campaigns against illiteracy, for the improvement in methods of cultivation, for the augmentation of water resources through wells and bore holes, and for the production of indigenous handicrafts and small-scale industries, mainly in the rural areas.¹⁸ Other social and public services that received considerable attention included health, electricity, and housing. Many new hospitals, health centers, and clinics were built, and many students were sent overseas on scholarships to study medicine. By 1960

15. Ibid., p. 200.

16. Republic of Ghana, Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Handbook* (Accra, 1967), table 82, p. 127.

17. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, p. 201.

18. E. A. Haizel, "Kwame Nkrumah on Education in Ghana," the Nkrumah symposium.

their number had risen to about four hundred. The number of hospital beds increased from 2,368 in 1951 to 6,155 in 1961, and that of doctors and dentists from 156 to 500.¹⁹ Campaigns were launched against such common diseases as yaws, tuberculosis, and leprosy in the rural areas. The Housing Corporation, established in 1956, constructed many houses for the people in the urban centers, while the supply of water and electricity was greatly improved and extended throughout the country. Installed electrical capacity rose from 84,708 kilowatts in 1951 to 120,860 in 1961. Equally phenomenal was the expansion of the infrastructure. The road mileage rose from 3,491 in 1951 to 5,396 in 1961, the number of post offices from 444 to 779 and that of telephones from 7,383 to 25,488.²⁰ It was certainly in the field of social and public services that Ghanaians tasted the full benefits and realized the true significance of independence. Had Nkrumah continued along similar lines, his government would probably not have been overthrown in 1966.

There were two other preoccupations of Nkrumah during the first phase. The first was to win international recognition for the new independent state. It must have been partly for this reason that Ghana joined the United Nations soon after independence and that it readily opened embassies and high commissions in most of the capitalist countries; it did so more cautiously in the socialist countries—the Ghana embassy in Moscow was not opened until January 1960. To carry Ghana's flag far and wide and thereby spread Ghana's name, Nkrumah established the Ghana Airways and the Black Star Line. He attended all the Commonwealth conferences, and, above all, he toured the United States and Canada in June, and India in December, 1958. His visit to the United States not only popularized the name of Ghana in that country but also electrified the blacks of that country, who became even more proud of their color and more aware of their African roots. Some began to look to Ghana as their spiritual home. This is clearly borne out by what Dr. Ralph Bunche said at a luncheon given in Nkrumah's honor in Harlem on that occasion:

We salute you, Kwame Nkrumah, not only because you are Prime Minister of Ghana, although this is cause enough. We salute you because you are a true and living representation of our hopes and ideals, of the determination we have to be accepted fully as equal beings, of the pride we have held and nurtured in our African origin, of the achievement of which we know we are capable, of the freedom in which we believe, of the dignity imperative to our stature as men.²¹

His tour of India, where he was hailed as "Africa's man of destiny," similarly

19. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 95.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Obed Asamoah, "Nkrumah's Foreign Policy," the Nkrumah symposium.

advertised the name of Ghana in the Asiatic world. To deal with the rapidly deteriorating internal political situation and also to enhance the prestige of the young nation between 1957 and 1959, Nkrumah expanded the Ghana Army, established the Ghana Navy and Air Force, and took measures to Africanize the officer corps.²²

What became Nkrumah's overriding preoccupations, however, were the total liberation of the African continent from colonial rule and neocolonialism, the practical implementation of Pan-Africanism, and the political union of Africa beginning with that of the West African countries. As early as 1945, he formed the "Circle" in London, which aimed to "maintain ourselves and the Circle as the Revolutionary Vanguard of the struggle for West African Unity and National Independence."²³ Much later, at midnight on 5/6 March 1957, that is, on the dawn of independence day, he declared: "The independence of Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked with the total liberation of the African continent." It is not surprising, then, that immediately after independence he began moves for a conference of independent African states, which took place in Accra in April 1958. This historic conference was attended by all the then independent states of Africa: Ethiopia, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Liberia, Sudan, and Ghana. The aims of this conference were, to quote his own words,

to exchange views on matters of common interest; to explore ways and means of consolidating and safeguarding our independence; to strengthen the economic and cultural ties between our countries; to decide on workable arrangements for helping fellow Africans still subject to colonial rule; and to examine the central world problem of how to secure peace.²⁴

The outcome of the conference was most encouraging. The conference agreed to all the aims stated above; it also decided to name 15 April "Africa Freedom Day, to mark each year the onward progress of the liberation movement and to symbolize the determination of the people of Africa to free themselves from foreign domination."²⁵ Nkrumah followed this conference with a tour of all those states that were in attendance "to cement contacts and exchange views on African development which had taken place since the Accra conference."²⁶ This conference was of great historical significance. It was the first of its kind to be held. Second, as Nkrumah himself put it, it marked the movement of

22. K. Adu, "The Armed Forces under Kwame Nkrumah," the Nkrumah symposium.

23. Kwame Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path* (London, 1973), p. 48.

24. Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (New York, 1963), p. 136.

25. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 126.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

Pan-Africanism to Africa, "its real home." On the eve of the conference, the venerable Dr. Du Bois wrote to Nkrumah, "I hereby put into your hands, Mr. Prime Minister, my empty but still significant title of president of the Pan-African Congress due I trust to meet soon and for the first time on African soil at the call of the independent state of Ghana."²⁷ Third, it began the process that was to culminate five years later in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Finally, it enhanced the position of Ghana and Nkrumah as the pacesetters in the Pan-Africanist movement.

Even more interesting and more historic was the All-African People's Conference that Nkrumah called in December 1958, again in Accra. Its main purpose was "to formulate concrete plans and work out the Gandhian tactics and strategy of the African Non-Violent Revolution in relation to: (1) Colonialism and Imperialism; (2) Racialism and Discriminatory Laws and Practices; (3) Tribalism and Religious Separation; (4) The Position of Chieftaincy under (a) Colonial Rule (and) (b) A Free Democratic Society" and finally "to formulate and proclaim our African Personality based on the philosophy of Pan-African Socialism as the ideology of the Non-Violent Revolution."²⁸ In all, sixty-two nationalist organizations and parties from twenty-eight countries attended. Among the then relatively unknown, but later to become famous, political leaders were Patrice Lumumba, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Tom Mboya, Oginga Odinga, Joshua Nkomo, Kamuzu Banda, and Roberts Frantz Fanon, who attended as a member of the delegation of the FLN of Algeria.²⁹ The members of the conference agreed to: work actively for a final assault on colonialism and imperialism; use nonviolent means to achieve political freedom, but to be prepared to resist violence if the colonial powers resorted to force; set up a Permanent Secretariat to coordinate the efforts of all nationalist movements in Africa for the achievement of freedom; condemn racialism and tribalism wherever they exist and work for their eradication and in particular to condemn the apartheid policy of the South African government; and work for the ultimate achievement of a Union or Commonwealth of African states.³⁰

This conference brought together freedom fighters from all the colonial territories—British, French, Portuguese, Spanish—and from the racist minority regimes of South Africa and the Rhodesias, thereby uniting them into a single front against a single evil, namely, colonialism. Second, it provided the fighters with a common ideology, strategies and facilities. Above all, the

27. Quoted by Asamoah in "Nkrumah's Foreign Policy," the Nkrumah symposium. See also Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 43.

28. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, pp. 132–34.

29. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 120.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 120–21.

conference in general, and the speeches and activities of Nkrumah in particular, infused a new spirit and a new dynamism into the independence movement. There is no doubt that many of the leaders who attended the conference as moderates, such as Lumumba and Banda, returned home as firebrands. This conference was followed a few months later with the opening of the African Affairs Centre in Accra "to house freedom fighters from all over Africa" and in 1960 with the setting up of the Bureau of African Affairs "to be a centre for study of developments in all parts of Africa, and to further the activities of all organizations working for the freedom and unity of Africa."³¹ By the end of 1960 Accra had become the Mecca of African freedom fighters, with Nkrumah as the undisputed leader of the African independence movement and the "voice of Africa."

Nkrumah maintained the anti-colonial and liberation momentum gained at this conference by keeping in constant touch with all those leaders and by seizing every opportunity—at the United Nations, the Commonwealth conferences, his visits to the United States, India, Canada, and various African countries—to attack colonialism and imperialism and to call for the granting of independence. It can be asserted with some confidence that the conversion of the former French African colonies to the course of independence, rather than union or association with France, and the winning of independence by as many as fourteen African countries in 1960 owe a great deal to Ghana's success and Nkrumah's dynamic advocacy of independence.

The sudden achievement of independence by Guinea in 1958 and the subsequent political and economic crisis into which it was plunged provided Nkrumah with a golden opportunity of taking the first concrete step toward the realization of the second of his lifelong objectives, the political unification first of West Africa and then of the whole continent. Not only did Nkrumah in a magnificent practical demonstration of Pan-Africanism readily grant a loan of ten million pounds sterling to Sékou Touré to tide Guinea over, but followed this up with negotiations that led to the formation of the Ghana-Guinea Union in November 1958. As Nkrumah himself later explained, the Union "was an expression of the determination of President Sékou Touré and myself to start the unification process by setting up an embryo organization which other states could join as and when they wished."³² Hopes for the early realization of the dream of African Unity soared when President Tubman called another conference at Sanniquellie in Liberia in July 1959 attended by Nkrumah and Sékou Touré. This conference resolved to form a community of independent African states that was to be an economic, cultural, and social organization.

31. Ibid., p. 170.

32. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 135.

These hopes were further intensified by the second meeting of independent African states in Addis Ababa in June 1960 and by the formation of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union in July 1961.

The achievements of Ghana under the dynamic leadership of Nkrumah during the first three years of independence were truly phenomenal and exceeded all expectations. Internally, great progress was made on practically all fronts, and Ghanaians were filled with pride, confidence, and optimism. Externally, Ghana made quite a name for herself and became the leading country in and the spokesman for Africa, the Mecca of freedom fighters, the African home of Pan-Africanism, an inspiration for black peoples throughout the world, the champion of African personality, and the pacesetter for the anti-colonial and liberation movements and for African unity. Panaf has concluded that "one of the most remarkable of Nkrumah's achievements was his successful projection of an African voice in world affairs."³³

The most interesting feature of Nkrumah's activities during the early 1960s is the continuity of his basic objectives. They remained the development or restructuring of Ghana's society and economy, the liberation of Africa from colonialism and neocolonialism, and the attainment of the political union of Africa and Pan-Africanism. What did undergo a remarkable and significant change was his order of priorities. Ghana's economy and society were not only to be reconstructed, but from July 1961 the reconstruction would conform to the principles of scientific socialism adapted to suit Ghanaian conditions, a hybrid ideology that became known as African Socialism or Consciencism or Nkrumahism. African liberation, Pan-Africanism, and African Unity were to be pursued by a combination of both violent and nonviolent means as well as intense propaganda through diplomacy and the mass media. Instead of Ghana first, the priority became African unity and African liberation. This change of ideology and strategy and the reordering of his priorities precipitated his downfall. The consequences underlie the acute socio-economic crisis still confronting Ghana today.

The change in economic policy was conspicuous.³⁴ Though Nkrumah had believed in socialism since the 1940s and though his party (the CPP) aimed at "building a socialist state in which there would be no capitalist exploitation," during the period of his rule from 1951 until three clear years after independence, he refrained from any practical application of that ideology. After 1960, however, he began to emphasize the need for the socialist reconstruction of Ghanaian society and to implement it. In a speech in January 1960, he stated that the political struggle had been won and that "the struggle for economic

33. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 140.

34. Kodwo Ewusie, "The Legacy of Nkrumah's Industrial Policies," the Nkrumah symposium.

and social reconstruction of our society" should begin. Furthermore, he saw the key to this socialist reconstruction in industrialization. As he told the CPP study group in April 1961:

Ghana is not a socialist state . . . we still have to lay the foundation on which socialism can be built, namely, the complete industrialisation of our country. All talk of socialism, of economic and social reconstruction, are just empty words if we do not seriously address ourselves to the question of industrialisation and agricultural revolution.³⁵

These ideas were given concrete and practical expression first in the budgets of 1960–1961 and 1961–1962 and especially in the Second Five Year Development Plan (SFYDP) and the Seven Year Development Plan (SYDP) of 1963. Both plans envisaged the establishment of "not less than 600 factories of varying sizes producing a range of over 100 different products." In the second plan, as much as 26 percent of public investment was to go into manufacturing and mining, 41 percent into infrastructure and public services to facilitate industrialization, and only 10 percent to agriculture. Indeed, the plan envisaged an increase of 83 percent in the output of the industrial sector by 1970, by which time most Ghanaian consumer demands would be met through local products while agricultural and mining products would be processed in Ghana before export.³⁶

With what success was this ambitious socialist industrialization program implemented between 1961 and 1966? By the time of Nkrumah's fall in February 1966, there were some twenty largescale state and mixed enterprises directly under the State Enterprises Secretariat (SES). There were also forty-three other enterprises in operation, while the gold refinery at Tarkwa, asbestos, cement, shoe, and rubber-tire factories at Kumasi, and a factory for the manufacture of prefabricated houses at Accra, were nearing completion.³⁷ The gross output of fifteen of the enterprises under the SES for which figures are available amounted to 20 million cedis in 1965, and, contrary to what is generally supposed, ten of those twenty state enterprises were in fact making a profit.

But if the socialist industrialization strategy achieved some successes, it also chalked up some failures, and some of them quite disastrous. If ten of the twenty state enterprises were profitable, the others were incurring losses, and some of them, such as fiber-bag, glass, and steel works, very heavy losses indeed. In any case, the overall position of the State Enterprises Secretariat

35. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, p. 213.

36. Ewusie, "Nkrumah's Industrial Policies," and Darko, "Manufacturing Industries in Ghana."

37. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 93.

by 1965 was a loss of 440,100 cedis.³⁸ Although one of the main reasons for the industrialization drive was to achieve import substitution and thereby save foreign exchange, this strategy was successful only in the textile and shoe industries; it failed in virtually all the other areas. Nor did the program save any foreign exchange.

To conclude, then, though the socialist industrialization policy contributed to the overall growth of the economy and though it succeeded “in transforming the industrial profile of the economy from its dominance by the wood and cork industry to one dominated by light consumer goods such as beverages, textiles, and tobacco,” it was on the whole a failure. By 1966, the standard of living of the average Ghanaian was much worse than it had been in 1960, since he or she faced an acute shortage of all sorts of manufactured goods, including such basic essentials as drugs, spare parts, provisions, and even locally produced foodstuffs. How then can this failure be accounted for?

To this writer, the first and most important reason was Nkrumah’s refusal to heed the sane, realistic, and practical advice on industrialization given to him by Sir Arthur Lewis, the famous West Indian economist. In a report submitted at the request of the government as early as 1953,³⁹ Lewis emphasized that industrialization should be preceded by and based on agricultural production. He observed:

In the Gold Coast there is very little sign of an increase in agricultural productivity . . . physical production per man, outside the cocoa industry, is probably constant, and in the cocoa industry it is probably declining. According to the Government Statistician, about half the adult male population of the Gold Coast is engaged in food production (excluding cocoa which absorbs only one-third as many). This half of the economy is almost certainly stagnant. . . .

He emphasized, “In unenlightened circles agriculture and industry are often considered as alternatives to each other. The truth is that industrialization for a home market can make little progress unless agriculture is progressing vigorously at the same time.”

Another significant reason for the failure of Nkrumah’s socialist industrialization drive was the inadequate, unsuitable, and erratic supply of raw materials. Since the Lewis thesis was rejected, most of the raw materials needed to feed the factories had to be imported from abroad, and as the foreign exchange dwindled so did the supply of raw materials. The supply did not often arrive on time, nor was it of the desired quality. The result was that

38. Ewusie, “Nkrumah’s Industrial Policies.”

39. Arthur Lewis, *Report on Industrialization and the Gold Coast* (Accra, 1953).

most of the industries in both the public sector and the private were always producing below capacity.

A third reason was inadequate capitalization. Instead of relying on guaranteed internal sources, the government drew up its development plans in the hope that it would be able to raise sufficient capital and loans from abroad. Despite the high incentives provided by the Capital Investment Act of 1963 (such as an income-tax holiday of five to ten years, exceptions from indirect taxes and charges, employment tax credits, and guarantees against expropriation and transfer of profits), not much capital was attracted from abroad, except for the Volta River Project.

The very active direct state involvement in the industrial sector also contributed to failure in crucial ways. In pursuit of the policy of "jobs for the boys," most of the corporations and state industries were compelled to employ more people than were needed—leading to unnecessary and heavy wage bills and overheads. Most of the people in managerial and administrative positions were placed there not because of their qualifications and experience but because they were good party members or protégés of powerful ministers and party bosses. This inevitably led to inefficiency, corruption, and, above all, lack of effective planning and management. Moreover, sites for industries were chosen not for economic and strategic reasons but for political reasons.

The final important reason was the continuous drop of the world cocoa price, the main foreign exchange earner for the country. From a record figure of £476 per ton in 1954, it dropped to £221 in 1956 and to the all-time low figure of £87.50 in 1965.⁴⁰ Since the Seven Year Development Plan was based on the assumption that the price of cocoa would not fall below £200 per ton, and since the cost of imported goods, machinery, and raw materials needed for the industries rose at the same time by over 25 percent, it was obvious that the plan was bound to fail.

Equally disastrous was the outcome of Nkrumah's policies in the agricultural field. He saw increased agricultural production as one of the effective means of increasing food supply and foreign-exchange earnings, as well as improving the living conditions of the rural folk. Insufficient attention was given to this sector, and, dictated by the socialist approach, the wrong strategy was applied. Instead of providing and encouraging small and peasant farmers, he opted rather for "the large-scale settlement approach to rural development during the period 1960–66 through the establishment of large-scale mechanized, centrally directed farms."⁴¹ It is not surprising, then, that

40. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 114.

41. C. K. Brown, "Rural Development in Ghana: Policies and Programmes during the First Republic," the Nkrumah symposium.

by 1966 Ghana was not producing enough to feed herself and that the cost of even locally produced foodstuffs was so high.

In the field of trade and banking, the socialist approach also had its impact. From 1961 onward, with the abrogation of the open general license system and the introduction of import controls, the Ghanaian National Trade Corporation (GNTC) became the main importer and distributor of goods, especially from the Eastern-bloc socialist countries. Ghana's external trade with the socialist countries was very limited by 1960, accounting for only 4.3 percent of its import trade. But from 1961 there was a rapid expansion, especially after the tour of socialist countries by the Ghana trade mission and the conclusion of bilateral trade agreements with ten of them, namely, Albania, Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Romania, the USSR, and Yugoslavia.⁴² Most of the imports from the socialist countries consisted of industrial equipment needed for the industrialization program. The reasons for this increasing bias in favor of the socialist countries were not only ideological and anti-imperialist (aimed at ending neocolonialism), but above all practical, necessitated by "the deteriorating balance of payments position and the acute shortage of hard currency which became a feature of Ghana's postcolonial economy."⁴³ Ghana stepped up its trade with other African countries from 1961. Until independence, she had no trade relations with any African country except South Africa. By 1957, £1.58 million worth of South African products were imported into Ghana, while Ghana's exports amounted to £13 million. This was inconsistent with Nkrumah's radical and socialist and anti-apartheid public stand, and it is not surprising that in 1960 he imposed a ban on trade with South Africa. By 1961 that trade had practically ended. Conversely, to help build economic independence, guarantee political freedom, and eliminate neocolonialism, Nkrumah steadily increased Ghana's trade with African countries as they became independent.

Nevertheless, Ghana's African trade failed to expand and remained relatively small. It in fact declined steadily in absolute terms until 1965. Trade with her immediate neighbors declined more sharply, while that with more distant ones increased. Fear of Ghana's militant Pan-Africanism and their membership of the Entente surely explain the steady decline of trade between Ghana and her immediately neighboring former French colonies, while the increase of Ghana's trade with the North African states as well as Mali reflect her increasing political ties with those countries by 1965. The main reason why Ghana's overall African trade remained small, however, was her own growing unfavorable balance of payment position, the neocolonial nature of the economy of most independent African states, and the com-

42. Jonah, "Ghana under Nkrumah."

43. *Ibid.*

petitive rather than the complementary nature of their industrialization programs.

Practically all Nkrumah's other social and political activities were also influenced by his new socialist and Pan-Africanist approach. Political and administrative power became concentrated in the hands of Nkrumah and his party, the CPP. The first move in this direction was the conversion of Ghana into a republic and the replacement of the governor-general, the representative of the queen, as head of state by the prime minister under the title of the president, and the introduction of a new constitution. Both measures were approved in a plebiscite held in April 1960.

Though the conversion of Ghana into a republic was welcomed by a majority of Ghanaians, the powers conferred on the president by the new constitution alarmed many people. Under this new constitution, the president could rule by decree, reject decisions of Parliament either wholly or partially, and dismiss any public servant. In other words, he became a constitutional dictator and he used these powers extensively. Orders beginning "The President commands" became common. The final constitutional move in accordance with the new socialist strategy was made in 1964 when, after a palpably rigged plebiscite, Ghana was declared a one-party state and the president was empowered to dismiss any judge of the High Court "at any time for reasons which appear to him sufficient."⁴⁴

Besides these measures, Nkrumah compelled nearly all existing institutions and associations such as the civil service and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to become integral wings of the party of which he became general secretary in May 1961. Furthermore, he established complete control over the press, radio, and television. Partly to eliminate all opposition to his autocratic and dictatorial measures and partly to ensure his own and the state's security, he applied the Preventive Detention Act (PDA) passed in July 1958 frequently and callously. While only 70 people had been detained prior to 1960, the number increased to 311 in 1961 and to 586 in 1963. Among the detainees were distinguished opposition members such as Dr. J. B. Danguah and Obetsebi Lamptey, both of whom died in detention.⁴⁵ This reckless application of the PDA drove hundreds of Ghanaians into voluntary exile and was the measure that caused widespread fear and panic throughout all sections of the Ghanaian community, including even ministers and members of the CPP itself.

All this centralization and concentration of power in the hands of Nkrumah and his party were meant to accelerate the achievement of the socialist reconstruction of Ghana and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, and neo-

44. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, pp. 210-11.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

colonialism. Above all, Nkrumah sought to attain a socialist, All-African Union Government.

Beginning with the All-African Peoples' Conference in 1958, Nkrumah increased his liberation efforts, leading partly to the liquidation of colonialism from as many as fourteen African countries in the single year of 1960, most of which were former French colonies. Rather than resting on his oars, he increased the tempo of his liberation activities throughout Africa in direct and indirect ways and by means that were material, educational, moral, and psychological. Thus, throughout this period he continued his liberation campaigns at the United Nations and other international arenas. As Obed Asamoah has recently pointed out, Ghana was certainly

instrumental at the United Nations and other international fora in spearheading the adoption of a number of measures against the colonial and racist presence in Africa; most notably, General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960 on the granting of independence to colonial territories and Resolution 1761 at the 17th session of the General Assembly in 1962 requesting Member States separately or collectively to apply diplomatic and economic sanctions including an arms embargo against South Africa as well as the establishment of the UN Special Committee on Apartheid which was assigned responsibility for reviewing UN policies on South Africa and assessing the extent of their effectiveness.⁴⁶

At home, Nkrumah established the external service in 1961, which was equipped to broadcast to the world not only in English and French but also in Arabic, Swahili, Portuguese, and Hausa. According to Nkrumah, his aim in establishing that service was partly to counter the "vile and vicious propaganda designed to cast doubts on the ability of the African to manage his own affairs" but above all "from this station, symbol of the true Voice of Africa, we shall continue to fight for our complete emancipation, assisting in the struggle for the total liberation of the African continent and the political unification of the African states."⁴⁷

Partly because of his belief that by having a modern and well-equipped armed forces Ghana's voice could be taken more seriously both within and beyond the African continent, and partly because of the possible use of the Ghana Army in the liberation movement as well as for internal security, he embarked on a radical reorganization, Ghanaianization and expansion of the Ghana Armed Forces. Thus, the Ghana Armed Forces by December 1960 consisted of an army of three infantry battalions, one field artillery without any

46. Asamoah, "Nkrumah's Foreign Policy."

47. P. A. V. Ansah, "Kwame Nkrumah and the Mass Media," the Nkrumah symposium.

signal unit, a navy and an air force, with a British officer as chief of defense staff and only 28 out of the 212 officers being Ghanaian. By 1962, however, they consisted of the same infantry battalions, an ordnance unit, a mobile signal, two reconnaissance squadrons, a field engineer squadron, a navy and an air force with the supreme commander, the DCS, and virtually all the officers being Ghanaian. By 1965, two more infantry battalions and a parachute battalion had been added, and the total strength of the army had risen to fourteen thousand men and officers.⁴⁸

But what was even more important was the direct financial and logistical support that Nkrumah gave to the liberation movements. Large sums of money were secretly sent to radical parties in places such as Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Nyasaland (Malawi), Tanganyika (Tanzania), and all the liberation movements throughout the continent. Scholarships and other facilities were awarded to refugees and students from South Africa, South West Africa (Namibia), and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) to study in Ghana and overseas, while freedom fighters were brought to Ghana for training. The control of the funds specially set aside for such purposes and the coordination and direction of these activities became the responsibility of the Bureau of African Affairs. If by 1965 colonialism had been liquidated from the whole of the continent except the Portuguese colonies and the racist regimes in southern Africa, and if in the latter areas success was only a matter of time, a great deal of this phenomenal achievement should be attributed to Ghana and Nkrumah.

Concurrently with his campaign for the total emancipation of Africa from colonialism and neocolonialism ran another and, indeed, complementary campaign, that of the attainment of the political union of Africa on socialist lines. Not only did this assume precedence over all Nkrumah's other activities both internal and external but it in fact became an obsession with him. Why then did he become so obsessed with African unity from 1960 onward, and what concrete measures did he adopt for its realization?

The first and most obvious answer was the failure of his Congolese objectives. Nkrumah had given every assistance to Lumumba in his liberation campaign against the Belgians and had in fact concluded a secret pact with him in August 1960 for the two countries to form a political union.⁴⁹ The revolt in the Congo soon after the successful completion of the campaign that led ultimately to Lumumba's murder at the hands of the Western powers, in spite of all the efforts of Ghana and the United Nations, brought home to Nkrumah two crucial lessons. The first was the need to Ghanaianize and expand his army, and the second was the need for a united stand of all Africa against

48. Adu, "Armed Forces."

49. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, p. 130.

Western imperialist machinations and the formation of what he came to call the African High Command. As he stated on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone at Winneba in February 1961, "I have never once stopped shouting to all Africans about African Unity. The sad episode in the Congo more than justifies my fears about the unwisdom to stand alone."⁵⁰ The second was the identity that he had come to see between African unity and socialism. As he put it: "At the core of the concept of African Unity lies socialism and the socialist definition of the New African Society. Socialism and African Unity are organically complementary."⁵¹

Nkrumah held deeply the conviction that complete economic independence could never be achieved in Africa, and neocolonialism and balkanization ended, unless African states were united "in a socialist-directed All-African Union Government." He issued a summary statement on African unity on 20 January 1962:

In my view, a united Africa—that is the political and economic unification of the African continent should seek three objectives. Firstly, we should have an over-all economic planning on a united continental basis which would increase the industrial and economic power of Africa. So long as we remain disunited, so long as we remain balkanized, regionally or territorially, we shall be at the mercy of colonialism and imperialism. . . . Secondly, we should aim at the creation of a Joint Military Command. I do not see any wisdom in our present separate efforts to build up or maintain vast military forces for self-defence which, in any case, would be ineffective in any major conflict. . . . If we do not unite and combine our military forces for common defence, the individual states, out of a sense of insecurity, may be drawn into making defence pacts which will endanger the security of us all. There is also the expenditure aspect of this problem. The maintenance of military forces imposes a heavy financial burden on even most wealthy states. For young African States, who need every penny they can get for development, it is ridiculous—indeed suicidal—for each state, individually, to assume such a heavy burden when the weight of this burden could be easily lightened by sharing it among ourselves.

The third objective, which we should have in Africa comes from the first two to which I have just described. If we in Africa set up a common economic planning organization and a joint military command, it follows that we shall have to adopt a common foreign policy to give political

50. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, p. 208.

51. Kwame Nkrumah, *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (London and New York, 1968), p. 28.

direction to our national continental defence and our national continental economic and industrial development planning.⁵²

He elaborated all these points and advanced many more arguments in favor of his position on African unity in a book he published in 1963 under the dogmatic title *Africa Must Unite*.

Fully convinced not only of the necessity but the urgency of the issue, he pursued it with such fanaticism, ruthlessness, demagogic zeal, and Machiavellian tactics as to arouse the fears and suspicion of an overwhelming majority of his colleagues, who did all they could to frustrate him. First, as has already been pointed out, he established the external broadcasting service in 1961 both for the total liberation of the African continent and for the political unification of the African states. In the same year he allocated enough funds to the Ghana News Agency (GNA) to enable it to expand in such a way as to serve as the nucleus of an All-African News Agency with offices throughout Africa.⁵³ Next, he established the newspaper the *Spark* in 1962 as "an ideological weekly of analysis to specialise in ideological work and thought and provide the intellectual revolution which would dispel the doubts and confusion concerning the ideology of the African revolution." As he later elaborated: "The new Africa needs a new ideology, socialist in content and continental in outlook. The propaganda of such an ideology demands an ideological journal or journals serving all Africa. Hence *The Spark*."⁵⁴ Like the European medieval kings and the Asante kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he even resorted to marriage as a weapon. It must surely have been with a view to convincing all Africans of his sincerity about African unity and his continental perspective that he married an Egyptian woman, much to the shock and disappointment of many Ghanaian female eligibles. In *Africa Must Unite*, "dedicated to George Padmore and to the African nation that must be," he cogently argued the case for African unity. The publication of this book was timed to coincide with the meeting of the heads of African states at Addis Ababa in that year.

He also strove to convert the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union into the United States of Africa. Even before the end of 1960 two schools had emerged on the issue of African unification, the Ghana-Guinea school advocating the immediate formation of an All-African political union and an African High Command, and the Liberian school demanding a loose cultural, economic, and social association of states. This difference became crystallized in 1961 with the emergence of two blocs of African states: the radical Casablanca powers con-

52. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, pp. 116–17.

53. Ansah, "Mass Media."

54. *Ibid.*

sisting of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria that met at Casablanca in Morocco in January 1961 and the Monrovia powers consisting of Liberia, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Togoland that met in Monrovia in May 1961.⁵⁵ The next two years saw a flurry of diplomatic activities on the part of Ghana, the spokesman of the first group, on the one hand and Liberia and Nigeria on the other. Each aimed at winning the uncommitted African states to its side. As a result of these activities and through the intervention of the eldest statesman of Africa, Emperor Haile Selassie, the conference of heads of independent African states was held in Addis Ababa in May 1963. Though Nkrumah distributed copies of *Africa Must Unite* to all the delegates at the conference, and though in a very lengthy and impressive speech he made the case for the immediate formation of an All-African Union Government and an African High Command with great passion, dedication, and all his oratical powers and devices,⁵⁶ he failed to carry the day. On the contrary, the majority of the delegates sided with the Monrovia group; hence the formation of the loose union of African states which became and has been known since as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), with its headquarters at Addis Ababa.

The formation of the OAU was a slap in the face of Nkrumah, but he refused to accept it as such or to give up. As he told the National Assembly on 21 June 1963, on the occasion of the ratification of the Charter of the OAU, "We have proved at Addis Ababa that we are ready to build a united Africa. . . . Until Africa achieves its total independence and national unification, the African revolution will not have completed its destined task. When we talk of African Unity, we are thinking of a political arrangement which will enable us collectively to provide solutions for our problems in Africa." At the second meeting of the OAU in Cairo in 1964 he again raised detailed and concrete proposals for a union government for Africa and in a typically lengthy speech passionately and urgently pleaded for their immediate adoption. "Time, indeed is the crucial factor," he pleaded, "for time acts for those who use it with purpose and not for those who let it slip by. Those who do not use time as their agent, give the advantage to those who do." He concluded: "This is the challenge which history has thrust upon us. This is the mandate we have received from our people, that we set about to create a Union Government for Africa now; and this is also the challenge which Providence and destiny has thrust upon us. We cannot, we must not, we dare not fail or falter."⁵⁷ Unfortunately a majority of the African heads of states present remained unimpressed.

Instead of giving up the cause, Nkrumah rather came to believe that all those heads of state who opposed him were either imperialist stooges, or

55. Panaf, *Nkrumah*, pp. 126–27.

56. See the text in Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, pp. 259–73.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 277–97.

agents, or reactionaries. His approach from then on, therefore, was either to get rid of such heads of state or sponsor radical opposition parties in each African country to come to power. It was in order to carry on this campaign more effectively that he not only opened an embassy in practically every independent African country but also set up the African Affairs Secretariat under his direct control and supervision. As Obed Asamoah has recently pointed out, this secretariat "functioned as a separate and autonomous organ from the Ministry of External Affairs."⁵⁸ It is believed that the principal assignment of the officers of this secretariat attached to each of these embassies was to ensure the success of Nkrumah's union-government programs through fair or foul means. And it is believed that these officers were involved in the first coups in Togo and Nigeria and that they also poured in large sums of money to frustrate the formation of the East African Economic Community or any other regional organization that Nkrumah saw as an impediment or a possible impediment to the attainment of his All-African Union Government and African High Command. Above all, he opened the doors of Ghana to all sorts of political refugees from independent African countries in the hope of indoctrinating, training, and equipping them for their eventual return and capturing of political leadership in their respective countries.

It was also for the same reason that he not only attended all the OAU conferences, at each of which he persistently and stubbornly urged his pet theme of All-African union government, but he left no stone unturned to ensure that the OAU meeting scheduled for Accra in 1965 did take place. These "feverish diplomatic manoeuverings," to quote Nkrumah's own words,⁵⁹ included the dispatch of missions to persuade or arrive at a compromise with heads of African states who had expressed their reluctance to attend either because of the persistent interference of the agents of Nkrumah in their internal affairs or because of the presence of political refugees from their countries in Ghana. Above all, it was to ensure the success of this meeting, to impress the other African heads of states and to convince them of the availability of offices to serve as the headquarters of the future All-African union government that he put up the now famous Kwame Nkrumah Conference Centre at the fantastic cost of between ten and fifteen million cedis at the very time when Ghana faced an acute shortage of essential items and foreign exchange, as well as balance of payment problems.⁶⁰

The OAU conference met in October 1965, and, as everybody expected (except Nkrumah himself and a few of the extremely fanatical African leaders), it was a complete failure. The opening of the conference had to be

58. Asamoah, "Nkrumah's Foreign Policy."

59. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 299.

60. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change*, pp. 215-16.

postponed for a month in order to enable Ghana to convince all the independent African states to attend. In the end all the Entente states, that is, the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Dahomey, and Niger, together with Togo, boycotted the meeting.⁶¹ Nkrumah gave his long, anticipated, well-argued, and passionate speech for an All-African union government, but again to no avail. He remained undaunted. "I am more than ever convinced that Africa should unite into one state with a Union Government. This is the view which I stated at Addis Ababa in 1963 and in Cairo last year, and I still hold to this position," he declared.⁶² Four months later, in February 1966, Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup led by the armed forces and the police of Ghana. He ended up in exile in Guinea. In spite of all his hopes and machinations, he was never able to return to Ghana but died in exile in Rumania of skin cancer on 27 April 1972.

So ended the career of the first leader of government business, prime minister, and president of Ghana—and the history of the first decade of the independent state of Ghana. It was an eventful and exciting period indeed. Ghana's achievements especially in the first three or four years of its sovereign existence were truly remarkable and more than justified the struggle for independence. Ghana became the most famous African country and its leading spokesman. It became the Mecca of freedom fighters and the torchbearer of the African liberation movement. In the words of the famous West Indian calypso composer and singer Lord Kitchener, Ghana became the name that everybody wished to proclaim. Internally, phenomenal strides were made in all fields, social, economic, and cultural, and from 1951 to 1966 the country enjoyed political stability as it has never known since.

But from 1961 onward, Nkrumah got his priorities wrong while he played for higher external stakes: the liberation of Africa from colonialism and neo-colonialism and, above all and most urgently, for the attainment of an All-African union government. The cost involved in both the internal and external stakes were too high for the resources of the small country. By the beginning of 1966 Ghana was on the verge of bankruptcy, was diplomatically isolated, had become a pariah among African states, and most ironically, was seen as the main stumbling block in the way of African unity for which Nkrumah had fought with such fanaticism and relentlessness. The story of Ghana since independence, then, is a story of mistaken priorities, overwhelming ambition, reckless adventurism, and missed opportunities on the part of a single individual, Kwame Nkrumah. Never has the history of any African country begun with such promise and ended on such a note of failure and disappointment as that of Ghana during its first decade.

61. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, pp. 298–300.

62. For the full text of the speech, see Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, pp. 302–09.

9. *From Colonialism to Autocracy:*
Guinea under Sékou Touré, 1957–1984

L A N S I N É K A B A

The demise of colonial rule, whether by negotiation or by revolutionary struggle, has received as much attention in current historiography as European expansion did in the early twentieth century. A watershed in modern history, decolonization brought juridical sovereignty and political independence to almost all of Africa as well as a change in relations with the world. Therefore the concept of transfer of power from the colonial powers to an African elite requires serious empirical analysis. It is within this context that I shall discuss French rule in Guinea from the rise of Sékou Touré as the leader of an unprecedented strike in 1953 to his death and the quick overthrow of his regime in 1984. The sudden transfer of power in Guinea, a turning point in the annals of colonialism, compelled France eventually to accept the inevitability of independence in her empire in tropical Africa. The study of Guinean politics under Sékou Touré, and of the sudden collapse of his regime, illuminates both the consequences of the transfer of power and the theory and practice of post-independence African politics.

The concept of transfer of power can lack precision. As A. H. M. Kirk-Greene put it, “if there is no consensus about the meaning of this phrase, there is even less agreement about the more searching question of what was—indeed what actually *could be*—transferred.”¹ To a large extent, for example, the laws and decrees granting autonomy and independence to most French colonies did not imply full sovereignty. The constitution of the Fifth Republic

1. A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, “A Historical Perspective on the Transfer of Power in British Colonial Africa,” in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940–1960* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 569.

in 1958 called for a system composed of states federated to France, and which would ensure continued French domination in such essential matters as currency, defense, and strategic raw materials.² Furthermore, in 1960 President de Gaulle sponsored a constitutional amendment enabling an African state to be sovereign and yet a member of the *communauté française renouvelée*.³ Such an arrangement may explain why J. Suret-Canale thinks that the concept of transfer of power is loaded with ambiguity.⁴ Does the process necessarily lead to the end of colonialism? How does it differ from self-rule, liberation, or total independence? In my judgment, it implies a transfer of the instruments of sociopolitical control, including the means of coercion but not necessarily including the economic apparatus (a post-colonial regime will be judged on how it uses power and seeks to control the economy). The transfer of power made the Western-educated elite heir to the colonial powers through balloting, a process involving a shift of political legitimacy and precipitating the downfall of indigenous authority as a framework for nation building. Indeed, the ballot box, rather than ascribed values or even intrinsic individual merit, accounted for the transfer of power to a government, if not a man, as exemplified in the Guinean case with the prominent figure of Sékou Touré, “*l’homme du 28 septembre 1958*.”⁵

As a process indicating a transition from colonial rule to a degree of autonomy and sovereignty, the transfer of power need not connote a passive role by the colonized or an act of generosity by the colonizers. Independence was not given but won as the result of major change in the colonial setting as well as in world history. It was the consequence of such struggles as mass mobilization and riots in the colonies and the impossibility for the colonial powers to maintain the old system in the post-World War II context. A turning point was the rise of a new international order, with two superpowers opposed for different reasons to colonialism, and with the United Nations as an arena for encouraging decolonization and resolving international disputes peacefully.⁶

2. See the Constitution of the Fifth French Republic, Title XII, in Ruth S. Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa* (Oxford, 1970), p. 386.

3. To a degree, one could compare this French *communauté* to the British Commonwealth, although Britain and France followed different decolonization policies. The idea was to promote a supranational entity with integrative ties binding the former colonies and metropolises.

4. J. Suret-Canale, “From Colonization to Independence in French Tropical Africa: The Economic Background,” in Gifford and Louis, *Transfer of Power*, p. 476.

5. Sidiki Keita-Kobélé, *Ahmed Sékou Touré, l’homme du 28 septembre* (Conakry, 1977).

6. For example, see D. A. Low, “The Asian Mirror to Tropical Africa’s Independence,” in Gifford and Louis, *Transfer of Power*, p. 93, and Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, “Nationalism in a New Perspective: The African Case,” in H. J. Spiro, ed., *Patterns of African Development: Five Comparisons* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967). This view implies a contagion theory, which reduces African nationalism to an imitation and an epiphenomenon of Asian nationalism. The success of Arab and Asian nationalism a decade earlier, contrary to these writers, was a positive inspiration, not a determinant factor.

The ability of African leaders to take advantage of the new context, to organize broad movements and promote their own class interests, testifies to special leadership quality and world stature.⁷ With independence and sovereignty, however, such new issues as political viability, ideological consistency, and performance in the fields of development, democracy, and human rights would become paramount.

COLONIAL REFORMS, MASS MOBILIZATION, AND TRANSFER OF POWER

Guinea, approximately one-half the size of France, was part of the Federation of French West Africa. Decolonization there was directly related to the post-World War II reforms and the Algerian uprising that the successive governments of the French Fourth Republic found difficult to crush. To a large extent, France wanted to free her hands in Algeria by minimizing the threat of violence in sub-Saharan Africa. After the "putsch" of 13 May 1958, which brought General de Gaulle back to power and thereby tolled the knell for the Fourth Republic, he proposed a new constitution that envisioned a strong presidential regime in France,⁸ with direct bilateral ties between Paris and each colony at the expense of the federations of West and Equatorial Africa. Since 1956, Guinean leaders had denounced the antifederal bias of the successive French reforms, including Defferre's *loi-cadre* of June 1956.⁹ Guinean politics received further attention because all the parties opposed the proposals for the new constitution. During his electoral campaign throughout Africa, de Gaulle declared in Conakry in August 1958 that colonies had to choose "either local autonomy within the newly established French Community or total immediate independence with all its consequences."¹⁰ Undoubtedly, de Gaulle was furious after listening to Sékou Touré's brash speech at the Guinean Assembly, and his susceptibilities as well as those of the Guineans were therefore exacerbated.¹¹ Whether born of wounded pride or

7. David Fieldhouse has minimized this point in his "Decolonization, Development and Dependence: A Survey of Changing Attitudes," in Gifford and Louis, *Transfer of Power*, p. 512. On the other hand, Morgenthau and Hodgkin have shown the skills of African politicians. See Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 75, 120, 124, and Thomas Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (New York, 1957), pp. 12–15.

8. For a pertinent discussion of how de Gaulle's return to power could be regarded as legal and illegal, see Raymond Aron, *Démocratie et totalitarisme* (Paris, 1965), pp. 8–15, and *République impériale* (Paris, 1973).

9. For an appraisal of the *loi-cadre*, see Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 61–73. The Constitutional Commission provided no powers for the federal systems because of a lack of consensus among African deputies in Paris.

10. See Claude Rivière, *Guinea: The Mobilization of a People*, trans. V. Thompson and R. Adolff (Ithaca, 1977), p. 82.

11. Sékou Touré, *L'expérience guinéenne* (Paris, 1959), p. 80.

pressure from the French industrial leaders who valued Guinea's industrial potential, this frustration and this threat could not deter the Guineans from their decision to vote overwhelmingly against the constitution of the Fifth Republic on 28 September 1958.¹² This ballot resulted in their independence on 2 October 1958, and in "cold war" with France.¹³

The manner of Guinea's accession to independence needs further elaboration. Did the Guinean problem stem from Sékou Touré's tactical error in dealing with de Gaulle and the general's subsequent refusal to negotiate with him, as W. R. Johnson has argued? The same writer has also hinted that independence was an accident, "won by a reluctant revolutionary in a state of psychological trauma brought on by compulsive resort to rhetoric."¹⁴ To substantiate this allegation, Johnson presents Touré standing on the platform next to de Gaulle in Conakry on 25 August 1958 as a man "trapped in a corner of his own construction and who sought instinctive salvation in playing to the gallery." When Touré regained calm after his oratorical exploit, according to Johnson, "perplexed and unhappy, he sought to retrieve the situation and to apologize."¹⁵ Although interesting, the allusion to schizophrenia does not fully explain the Guinean dilemma in 1958. It is imperative to study seriously a leader as complex as Touré on strong historical data.

To explain the position of Touré and his Parti Démocratique de Guinée (PDG), one must consider the politics of decolonization and nationalism in the whole of French West Africa. Although the 1956 *loi-cadre* created elected territorial executives, and hence was a step toward autonomy, it contained no provision for a federal executive or for transfer of power. Many groups, including the PDG leaders, criticized this reform as a policy to prevent independence. By 1958 as pressure grew in most of West Africa, all the parties except the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) united under the banner of the Parti du Regroupement Africain (PRA) in July in Cotonou and asked for immediate independence. The PDG of Touré, the most radical branch of the RDA, took this initiative as a challenge to its own stance. Furthermore, the Union Générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noire (UGTAN), the large inter-African trade union led by Touré, called for a vote of no in de Gaulle's referendum, and hence for independence. These pressures accounted in part for Sékou Touré's sharply worded speech before de Gaulle on 25 August in Conakry and for his breaking discipline with the RDA central committee, which called for a vote of yes in its meeting on 12 September in Abidjan. The

12. See Rivière, *Guinea*, p. 82, and Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 118.

13. See Sylvain Soriba Camara, *La Guinée sans la France* (Paris, 1976).

14. R. W. Johnson, "Guinea," in John Dunn, ed., *West African States: Failure and Promise, A Study of Comparative Politics* (Cambridge, England, 1978), pp. 38–40.

15. Johnson, "Guinea," p. 40.

commitment of the Guinean opposition leaders to vote no and the unity and discipline of the population confute Johnson's psychoanalytic argument. Sékou Touré did not seek to apologize but rather to sway part of the French opinion toward Guinea and the negotiation of a deal with France.¹⁶ Moreover, the PDG government had gone further than any other West African government in implementing the *loi-cadre*. In other words, Guinea was ready for the transfer of larger powers but within the French system. Yet independence came unexpectedly.

Touré's apparent lack of deference made de Gaulle more willing to let Touré precipitate his own collapse and to permit Guinea to fall apart. Indeed, the French government, according to Georges Pompidou, assumed that ethnic conflicts exacerbated by an impending economic crisis would prevent nation building and compel Guinea to return to France.¹⁷ Subsequently contingency plans were adopted to provoke a food shortage in Conakry and to disrupt the Guinean economy.¹⁸ Sékou Touré had to devise a strategy to appeal to public opinion and the business community in order to have a better image in France and keep the economy running, a move that Johnson and others have misjudged. Guinea's ability to survive de Gaulle's "anger and obstinacy"¹⁹ and to achieve international acclaim set an example of complete independence. The Guinean political system came to be regarded as a model in sub-Saharan Africa, and the historic vote of no by the Guineans became the basis of heroic myth, along with the revolutionary image of Sékou Touré, the head of state and government as from 1957.

Clearly, the transfer of power in Guinea was neither easy nor smooth. It was most abrupt. De Gaulle was bitter, and Touré, rightly so, very suspicious of French intentions.²⁰ In September 1958. French military reinforcements were dispatched to Guinean towns in the event of trouble, but discipline prevailed among the population. Unprepared for the *no* vote, the French government made an example of Guinea by suspending all financial and technical aid except assistance for the aluminum complex of Fria, although Guinean leaders had urged Paris by cable to accept cooperation. Considering Guinea as a secessionist territory, the French recalled at once all their offi-

16. See Camara, *La Guinée*, pp. 148–60. According to many Guineans who witnessed these events, Touré could not apologize because Guinea committed no wrong. For the Guinean leaders, the vote of *no* was the culmination of a long struggle against colonial dependence and inferiority, hence an expression of pride. See *Guinée, prélude à l'indépendance* (Paris, 1958), pp. 163–65.

17. President Georges Pompidou, "Déclarations au cours du voyage officiel au Togo," in *Marchés tropicaux*, 1413 (8 December 1972).

18. See Georges Chaffard, *Les carnets secrets de la décolonisation*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1967), p. 218.

19. B. Ameillon, *La Guinée, bilan d'une indépendance* (Paris, 1964), p. 98.

20. See Camara, *La Guinée*.

cials, including physicians and teachers. These civil servants left confusion behind, abandoning the country with no provision for an orderly transfer of files. Some French administrators carried away their files, others destroyed them along with important equipment, and soldiers set fire to their barracks in some areas. Guinea was ostracized, and its economy and administration were suddenly disrupted. De Gaulle wanted this lesson to be clear to all Africa. Any independence without the consent of the French government would be dealt with accordingly, an attitude that gave France the image of a reluctant decolonizer. To make matters worse, since the terms of the relationship with France remained for many months undefined, most Western powers, unlike the Eastern bloc, were reluctant to develop ties with Guinea. Finally, the recognition of the Algerian provisional government by Conakry in August 1959 signaled a freeze in relations with France.²¹ Unlike the other French colonies, the continuity of colonialism was broken. With this rupture, there was a real possibility for Sékou Touré and his government to initiate far-reaching policies and build a social order different from the colonial one, particularly because the French-owned trading companies would soon leave. As will be shown below, however, the opportunity was missed. The abruptness of the transfer of power partly contributed to the Guinean regime's distinctive image of strong mobilization, political integration, and authoritarianism.

A reminder of the mass mobilization which had occurred for nationalism and independence would explain why and how Guinea sustained the French boycott without falling apart. The history of modern political organization in Guinea goes back to World War II. It followed the reforms that resulted from the Brazzaville conference of January-February 1944 sponsored by de Gaulle to change the institutional framework after the liberation of France and reward Africans for their role in the war. Although France did not envision systematic decolonization, the introduction of electoral policies and labor laws facilitated the creation of political parties and trade unions. The early movements operated on a regional or ethnic basis and were limited to the traditional oligarchy, civil servants, veterans, and other urbanized groups concerned primarily with their own interests.²² Among local parties for European

21. The recognition of the Algerian government did not result in a total suspension of the ties with Paris, contrary to Morgenthau's assertion (*Political Parties*, p. 253). Diplomatic relations were broken in 1965.

22. These regional and ethnic movements included the Comité de la Basse-Guinée and the Unions des Insulaires in the coastal regions; the Amicale Gilbert Vieillard, which was very active among the Fulah in Futa Jallon; the Union du Mandé, which involved Mandinka-speaking people in Upper Guinea and living in towns elsewhere, mostly Conakry; and the Union Forestière in the forest region. In the early fifties, the alliance between the moderate elements of the three main regional movements led to the Bloc Africain de Guinée (BAG), which dominated local politics until 1956.

settlers whose position was disproportionately reinforced by the system of two electoral colleges, one for the French and the other for the Africans, the Front National (later known as Parti Progressiste de Guinée) had a significant impact on the growth of a radical African nationalism through its *Groupes d'études communistes* (GEC), which introduced young urbanized Guineans to the basics of Marxism.²³

Three supra-ethnic parties resulting from the merger of regional and voluntary associations dominated the political scene between 1954 and 1958. The moderate conservative Bloc Africain de Guinée (BAG) led by Framoï Bérété, Diawadou Barry, and Karim Bangoura, who were from Upper Guinea, Futa Jallon, and Maritime Guinea respectively, appealed to the customary elite, merchants, and high-ranking civil servants. The Démocratie Socialiste de Guinée (later called Mouvement Socialiste Africain) headed by Ibrahima Barry, known as Barry III, never assumed any dominant role. And the Parti Démocratique de Guinée (PDG), a branch of the large inter-territorial West African party known as the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), attracted low-echelon clerks, unionists, and other young urban dwellers, who numbered then among the most radical elements in Guinea because they were victims of racial discrimination and directly affected by the competition and arrogance of poorly educated whites (*petits blancs*). Yet the fear of administrative sanctions, and hence their interest in the colonial bureaucracy, made most of these clerks politically hesitant, if not opportunistic, as they shifted from one party to another.²⁴ From 1949 to 1957, the history of political development centered mainly around the struggle for power between the BAG and the RDA. That the rather tiny and insignificant PDG in 1947 could dominate Guinean politics ten years later, a major theme in Guinea's history, revealed an unusual level of mass mobilization and militancy, and cunning leadership.

The creation of the RDA at the congress of Bamako in 1946 aimed mainly at an effective anti-colonialist struggle and political performance through broad and well-organized mass support.²⁵ Its subsequent rise as the leading inter-territorial movement in the 1950s with goals and structures mostly defined in an anti-colonialist perspective might indicate a radical militant step in the early history of African nationalism. Although Sékou Touré was present at the

23. See Sékou Touré, *L'Afrique et la révolution* (Switzerland, n.d.), p. 49, and Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 22–27, for the role of the GECs in the development of modern politics in Guinea. Touré once worked with the Parti Progressiste de Guinée.

24. Jean Suret-Canale, *La république de Guinée* (Paris, 1970), p. 142.

25. L. Gray Cowan has claimed that the creation of the RDA expressed the dissatisfaction felt by African deputies in Paris at the defeat of the first constitution of the Fourth Republic in May 1946. See his "Guinea," in Gwendolyn M. Carter, ed., *African One-Party States* (Ithaca, 1962), p. 158. But the emergence of the RDA was related to larger concerns.

Bamako congress, the Guinean section—the PDG—only emerged in May 1947 under the leadership of the Malian Madéira Keita. It operated on weak foundations until 1951,²⁶ as continuous police and administrative surveillance and the lack of involvement of influential leaders in its ranks hindered its development. It had only two elected representatives at the local assembly.²⁷ Its lack of support in the villages in a predominantly rural country made it particularly weak. The PDG also proved then incapable of withstanding the challenge of regionalism and voluntary associations as “each ethnic group maintained its own representation within the *Comité directeur*.”²⁸ The extremism of the PDG, and its continuous alliance with the Communists despite the RDA’s official break with the Communist party, made its members the target of police harassment, while the administration’s tampering with the elections negatively affected its electoral fortune.

Touré was known for his participation in Communist-sponsored conferences.²⁹ After his rise to the position of general secretary in 1951, following an established labor tradition, the PDG began to formulate policies of concrete militant action and goals applicable to all Guinea, stipulating democratic centralism and regional integration as conditions for strength and ultimate national dominance.³⁰ It adopted the principle of regular consultation with the masses and published its own literature despite prohibitive fees and censure.³¹ Unity of all the peoples on anti-colonial and progressive bases became its dominant motto. It concentrated its efforts on broadening its support among the peasantry, trading groups, and civil servants, a move that proved most profitable later. The PDG also maintained strong links with the

26. Sékou Touré, *L'expérience guinéenne et l'unité africaine* (Paris, 1959), p. 13. Keita was summarily transferred to the French Sudan (Mali) in retaliation for his militancy; he served as minister of justice in the government of Modibo Keita.

27. Kaman Camara of Macenta and Amara Soumah of Conakry were the two representatives. But Soumah joined the BAG majority caucus. The elections of Sékou Touré in Beyla in 1951 gave the RDA a stronger voice at the Assembly.

28. See Victor Dubois, “Guinea,” in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, eds., *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley, 1964).

29. African representatives in the French Parliament joined in alliance with French parliamentary party groups to have a greater influence. The pattern of changing alliances expressed the movement of the majority in France and the pressure of the government. Because of the wave of anticommunism, the RDA leadership broke all links with the Communists in October 1950. See Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 90–102.

30. See Touré, *L'expérience guinéenne*, and Suret-Canale, *La république de Guinée*, pp. 159–72.

31. Three journals were successively associated with the PDG: *Phare de Guinée* (Guinea’s Lighthouse) from 1947–1950; *Coup de bambou* (Bamboo Stroke) from 1950–1958; and *Liberté*, which became the national daily *Horoya* after independence. An inter-territorial RDA paper, *Le Réveil* (The Awakening) also appeared.

most important trade union then existing in Guinea, the branch of the French Communist party–dominated *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) led by Touré. This collaboration, to quote Ruth Morgenthau, gave the PDG access to funds, travel, training, political experience, and metropolitan allies against the local administration.³²

Thus, although politics and unionism were linked in most African territories, unionism was a more decisive force in raising national consciousness in Guinea than elsewhere because of an umbilical relationship between the PDG and organized labor. Mutually beneficial, their collaboration contributed to the success of nationalism. The PDG appeared as the offspring and the arm of a dominant trade union in the political arena, as reflected by the state of the Guinean economy between 1947 and 1955. In 1945, the labor movement was tiny and inconsequential. There were many unresolved cumulative grievances against both the government and private employers. Postal workers were the first wage earners to organize units for collective bargaining within the framework of the CGT—Sékou Touré worked in telecommunications before losing his job due to his union activities.³³ Railroad employees and other wage earners in public and private sectors then got organized. Soon the diversity of unions called for a program of common action and leadership, which led in 1947 to the creation of a Guinean labor federation affiliated with the CGT and opposed to the Christian-inspired union.

Economic growth was beneficial to unionism. By 1950 the French described Guinea as the colony most endowed with natural resources.³⁴ Iron-ore production had begun, and the completion of a bauxite installation on the island of Loos off the coast of Conakry heralded the beginning of an industrial era. The production of bauxite rose from 325,000 tons in 1953 to 500,000 tons in 1955. Iron ore exported from the peninsula of Kaloum off Conakry jumped from 400,000 tons to 650,000 tons in the same period. Huge iron-ore deposits were also discovered in Mount Nimba near the Liberian border, and an unusually large hydro-electric potential indicated the possibility of abundant and cheap energy supply in all regions.³⁵ During 1954–1955, the diamond rush that had enlivened the hinterland of neighboring Sierra Leone spread to Kérouané district in Upper Guinea. Banana and pineapple plantations with growing African participation sprang up in the coastal plains and along the railroad in Futa Jallon, while a vigorous peasant economy promoted coffee

32. Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 227.

33. Two other unions, one Christian-affiliated and the other anti-Communist, also operated throughout French West Africa. See Keita-Kobélé, *Ahmed Sékou Touré*, pp. 44–45.

34. For example, see Roland Pré, *L'avenir de la Guinée* (Conakry, 1951), and Paul-Henri Siriex, *Une nouvelle Afrique: A.O.F.* 1957 (Paris, 1957).

35. See Pré, *L'avenir de la Guinée*, pp. 180–90.

cultivation in the forest region.³⁶ Concerted efforts in Lower and Upper Guinea were aimed at food production and at making Guinea the rice granary of West Africa.³⁷ Concomitantly, many light industries were developed in Conakry and its vicinity. Industrialization accelerated migration to the cities and contributed to swelling the ranks of the labor movement in general and the CGT-affiliated union in particular, which had won a reputation for its steadfast commitment to the defense of the rights of the urban and rural wage earners.³⁸ Indeed, with extensive labor protests and trials in 1951 and 1952, Sékou Touré assumed the double position of an energetic militant organizer and eloquent theoretician.

The trade-union base broadened the attraction of the PDG and familiarized its leaders with the techniques of mass movements and protest, notably strikes, demonstrations, and strenuous party discipline. With the growing mineral exploitation in the coastal region, and the subsequent urbanization, the party played an even bigger role. The long general strike from 21 September to 25 November 1953, and Touré's success in gaining better wages and working conditions, made his movement both progressive and attractive. The trade-union experience of many PDG leaders affected their ideas as well as their style of living and communicating, as they lived of necessity close to the people and prized discipline and collective solidarity more highly than sophistication and proficiency.³⁹ The seventy-day strike of 1953 had major consequences. First, the decree of the government increasing the minimum wage by 20 percent reinforced the mystique of Touré and his party. The number of his union members increased from four thousand in 1953 to twenty thousand in 1954 to forty-four thousand in 1955. The solidarity achieved during the strike became a strong force in heightening nationalist consciousness.

By 1954 the membership of the PDG had risen from about one hundred thousand to several hundreds of thousands of individuals organized in cells, and with a higher level of political sophistication relative to members of other parties.⁴⁰ The election of 1954, though officially won by the BAG, gave ample indication of the popularity of the PDG in all regions: it dominated the cities and had become a strong challenger in the countryside, the traditional strong-

36. In 1949, Guinea exported 1,315 tons of coffee; 39,500 tons of bananas; 30,370 tons of palm kernels; 270 tons of pineapples; 900 tons of honey; 125 tons of pure orange extract; and about 200,000 tons of rice. See *ibid.*, pp. 36–45.

37. Rice was cultivated everywhere but on the hills of Futa-Jallon. The French thought that Guinea could replace Indochina as a major rice zone for their tropical territories.

38. Guinea was experiencing a double process of peasantization and rural proletarianization. A growing number of poor farmers from Futa-Jallon and the forest were recruited in the plantations and worked under harsh conditions.

39. Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 230.

40. Touré, *L'Afrique*, p. 62.

hold of the BAG. Party rivalry lost most of its regional dimension and took on a definite ideological character, despite the assumed identification of the Fulah group with the BAG in the popular mind of the coast. While the PDG demanded radical reforms in the social order and opposed customary chieftaincies, the BAG extolled traditional values and open collaboration with the French administration. From 1955 to 1957, the atmosphere became tense and volatile. PDG mobs stirred up violence in Conakry, Kankan, Macenta, and other towns; many Guineans of the two parties lost their lives, and BAG sympathizers their properties.⁴¹ With their intense degree of mobilization and esprit de corps, the strikes gave women the opportunity to perform newer roles as messengers, organizers, and spearheads in regional politics.⁴² For example, Aïssata Mafory Bangoura, a housewife engaged in dyeing and tailoring in Conakry, captured the country's imagination by setting brigades against strikebreakers and non-PDG members, all lumped together as saboteurs. Thus violence and terror became a major part of the PDG's methods, as evidenced by the bloody riots of 1955 and 1957 when it had already gained a comfortable majority in the country (a practice to become an official policy responsible for mass arrests and executions in the 1960s and 1970s).

The 1956 municipal elections which almost coincided with the implementation of the autonomy bill (*loi-cadre*) saw the PDG's overwhelming success, with its candidates in control of the thirteen newly created townships. It also took two seats out of three in the elections of January 1956 to the French National Assembly. This pattern of triumph and popularity was again confirmed by the elections of March 1957 to the Guinean Territorial Assembly when it gained fifty-seven seats out of sixty. At this point, the success of the PDG ought to be understood both in terms of the boldness of its social programme—its appeal to workers, women, castes, and poor people, notably by its opposition to the traditional oligarchy—and also essentially in terms of the organizational capacities of Sékou Touré and his comrades.⁴³

Thereafter Touré headed the first Guinean government. One of his initial

41. Political violence, a dominant feature of Guinean politics in the mid-1950s, has yet to receive much attention in the literature.

42. See Keita-Kobélé, A. *Sékou Touré*, pp. 46–48. Such other prominent women in the region were Nyamakoron Kaba, Mbalia Camara, Djédoua Diabaté, Gbelia Diéné, and Loffo Camara. The last two, however, were killed in 1971 by the very party they helped build, and the third served many years of detention without trial.

43. It would be erroneous to assume that Touré alone organized the PDG. The party benefited from his contribution and that of many other leaders, men and women alike, from various social and ethnic backgrounds. Among these, Saifoulaye Diallo of Futa, a former deputy, Lansana Beavogui of the forest, Bangaly Camara, Nfamara Keita and Mafory Bangoura of Maritime Guinea, Lansana Diané, Toumani Sangaré, and Moussa Diakité of Upper Guinea deserve special attention.

tasks was to strengthen further the constituency of the PDG through the suppression of chieftaincies, the power base of the opposition parties, in December 1957.⁴⁴ Indeed, chiefs lost most of their influence with the defeat of the conservatives, and their administrative authority with the setting up of PDG village committees and police brigades. By 1957 in the rural areas, many tax payers paid their dues to elected community leaders or directly to the district officers in towns, thereby undermining the efficiency and legitimacy of the chieftaincies. About a fourth of these offices thus remained vacant. The PDG further accelerated its implantation throughout the country and attracted various social groups by lowering the head tax, allocating part of it to local governments, increasing the minimum wage, deregulating the rice trade, and extending to Africans the right to exploit diamonds.⁴⁵

Soon after, Touré decried the *loi-cadre* for its overall adverse effects, its lack of provision for real autonomy and ministerial responsibility, and for its built-in trends towards balkanization. These considerations of unity and responsibility became crucial after 1956. The PDG and other Guinean parties, despite their differences, agreed on the issue of federal unity and thought that a unified West Africa was a prerequisite both for the establishment of a United States of Africa and for economic development. Partly for that reason they unanimously opposed de Gaulle's proposal of the Fifth Republic constitution, and asked their members to vote no. Shortly after, Guinea became independent, and France recognized her independence with great reluctance, as discussed earlier.⁴⁶ The opposition parties unconditionally joined the PDG, although the constitution recognized the principle of a multiple-party system. Like its distinctive form of mass mobilization and transfer of power, post-independence history set Guinea apart from other West African countries.

TERROR AND POVERTY

Guinea's overwhelming no vote, and hence her independence, expressed the determination of Guineans to be free and to control their destinies. A courageous, momentous and far-reaching move, independence was expected to lead to greater freedom and social betterment. Yet the opposite proved true twenty-seven years later when the PDG regime collapsed under a military takeover. The issue, then, is to assess the performance of Sékou Touré's regime realistically, without idolization or dogmatism.

44. See Jean Suret-Canale, "Chieftaincy in Fouta Djallon, Guinea," in Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, eds., *West African Chiefs* (New York, 1970), pp. 79–95, and "The End of Chieftaincy in Guinea," in Irving L. Markovitz, ed., *African Politics and Society* (New York, 1970), pp. 96–117.

45. See *Guinée, prélude à l'indépendance*.

46. See Touré, *L'Afrique*, p. 68, and *L'Expérience guinéenne*, p. 168.

Following independence, Guinea experienced a high degree of politicization and ideological integration. The PDG absorbed the Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs Guinéens (CNTG: the only trade union operating in the country), the youth movement, and the Guinean women's organization. These bodies held the political views of the party and hence were represented at all levels. Of course, their integration into the PDG created problems in that the defense of the interests of their members could lead to their being labelled corporatist, deviationist, plotters, and counterrevolutionary, as happened to the delegation of teachers at the 1961 CNTG conference in their attempt to discuss working conditions and income disparities.⁴⁷

From then on, "discovering plots" became an instrument of government, a weapon in Touré's hands against potential critics or dissenters and even ordinary people in times of economic crisis. Thus, the Guinean one-party system became repressive and totalitarian: it encompassed all groups and institutions and restricted individual and corporate liberty. The ideal of the PDG was to foster not individual freedom but a collective sense of "togetherness." The implementation of this principle, however, was hampered by the extreme concentration of the state apparatus and coercive power in the hands of the president. Therefore, the party became a focal institution penetrating all aspects of the life of the country, individual as well as collective, and establishing its supremacy over all state apparatus. Holding supreme political, cultural, judicial, financial, and economic power, it became the supreme guide in the struggle for development. The Bureau Politique National (BPN), in whose hands the ultimate decision-making power was concentrated, was the focus of power both in the party and in the nation. From there emanated all directives to the lower echelons of the party, and all its members, accountable to Touré, held major ministerial positions.

Under these conditions, the reality of Guinean politics after 1960 did not conform to the ideals of democracy in either a classical liberal or socialist sense.⁴⁸ Guineans were denied such basic rights as freedom of expression and travel and access to decent social services. To criticize Touré's reports was considered a counterrevolutionary move and led to imprisonment.⁴⁹ The idea of a second party, although constitutionally possible until 1980, resulted in the discovery of the 1965 plot and the subsequent arrest and condemning to death

47. For a discussion of this situation, see Sako Kondé, *Guinée, le temps des fripouilles* (Paris, 1974).

48. Although any definition of democracy is arbitrary, it should include all or part of the following principles: rule of law with free choice of representatives, free political participation and competition, distribution and accountability of power, greater social justice, and equitable distribution of wealth. These criteria were not met in the PDG system.

49. For example, Balla Camara, a most competent minister, was arrested at a conference in 1969 for such action and subsequently, after the Portuguese invasion of 1970, condemned to death.

of Mohamed "Petit" Touré, his brothers, and many influential leaders, among whom was Diawadou Barry, a former BAG leader. To make a public speech without quoting Touré was seen as a sign of intellectualism contrary to revolutionary ideals and hence endangered one's advancement, if not one's life.⁵⁰ Touré had emerged both as the only source of law and the supreme judge. The magnitude of autocracy and cult of personality, contradictory to all democratic ideals, destroyed individual initiatives and rights and produced a Kafkaesque world generally unknown to outsiders.⁵¹

In other words, Guinea under the PDG had an autocratic system with the facade of a people's government. Touré, the only theoretician, confused democracy with "democratism" (which is primarily concerned with the forms rather than the content or implementation of democratic ideals).⁵² His opinions became laws as they were uttered. The recognition of his supremacy directly proceeded from that of the party's sovereignty, and hence its leader, the responsible suprême, simultaneously exercised all powers, political, executive, legislative, and judiciary. He intervened at his own discretion in legal cases and decided the verdict in the name of the people's will, which transcended any written code. As such, he was the embodiment of the nation and the ultimate lawgiver and interpreter. This concentration of power resulted in the weakening of the autonomy of the assembly and the judiciary and in the suppression of private law practice. The party held jurisdiction over all major matters. As the events in 1971 after the Portuguese-led invasion showed, detention without charge and condemnation without fair trial became normal features of everyday life.⁵³

As scarcely a year passed without an economic crisis, hence without a "plot," political trials became routine. The proliferation of these kangaroo courts indicates a continuity in the recourse to violence as a mechanism of government. Institutionalized terror was symbolized by a pervasive secret police and ubiquitous party militia with their sinister torture centers.⁵⁴ According to some observers, neurosis might account for Touré's bloody rule. Whatever the case might be, although psychotic, he was neither a buffoon nor a madman. The PDG system involved an implacable logic, concerned as it was

50. The failure by students to show a mastery of Touré's theories and poems through ample quotations led to failure of examinations. This was confirmed by Guinean teachers in their discussions of educational reform in July 1984.

51. See Lansiné Kaba, "Cultural Revolution and Freedom of Expression in Guinea," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 14, 2 (1976): 201-18.

52. Guinea had a constitution, a Parliament and other institutions, but Touré controlled them.

53. See *Horoya* (Conakry), 15-18 January 1971; *L'aggression portugaise*, p. 262; and Kondé, *La Guinée*, p. 49.

54. Camps Boiro and Alfa Yaya in Conakry and Camp Kémé Bouréma in Kindia counted among the most notorious torture and death centers. See J. Alata, *Prison d'Afrique* (Paris, 1979).

with its own perpetuation and eager to crush all in its path. The psychosis of permanent plots instilled fear among the citizenry and coerced them to comply. In this inferno, however, no one was safe, including the party's faithful servants and dignitaries. Machiavellian, Sékou Touré attached little value to justice and human life. This situation made Guinea a one-man show, in which Touré was the sole actor while others danced, applauded, or sang in his honor according to his whim.⁵⁵ He was not only the living hero, but also the *guide et stratège de la révolution*, whose expertise included all aspects of human knowledge from philosophy to agriculture—as evidenced by his numerous theoretical books and long poems, study of which was compulsory in the school system. This is how the cult of personality operated.

To avoid simplistic explanations, however, the issue of autocracy in Guinea cannot be reduced to the peculiar character of one man no matter how dominant his role. Unlike many observers who make Touré and his immediate entourage responsible for the tragedy in Guinea, I shall argue that the whole apparatus played a definite role in promoting totalitarianism. The party and its machinery built the image of a hero for Touré by calling him *Sily*, the stalwart and venerable elephant.⁵⁶ Touré should be viewed as the top of a pyramid with a large base consisting of many like-minded people of various ethnic and social backgrounds who enjoyed power and abhorred dissent. These officials, tyrants in their own right, were the main agents of the cult of personality, those without whom the system could not have endured, whom Touré knew how to manipulate for the sake of his personal rule, and who competed for his attention and reward.

As should now be evident, the structures of the PDG closely followed Marxism-Leninism in its Stalinist model of organization marked by self-righteousness, intolerance, and brutality. This, in part, might be due to the impact of the GEC and other Communist-led organizations on Touré and the first generation of PDG leaders. Yet other reasons could explain the attraction of Stalinism to the Guinean elite. First, African nationalism came into existence at the time when "the intellectual climate of the world was heavily impregnated with socialist principles and visions of society."⁵⁷ The emerging Guinean leaders had already witnessed the inefficiency of liberalism and capitalism and had begun to opt for an alternative. Socialism was not only a theory to explain imperialism and colonialism, but a concrete doctrine of development—as Touré had learnt from his trade-union studies and from the relative

55. See Lansiné Kaba, "Guinean Politics: A Critical Overview," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 15, 1 (1977): 25–45.

56. See Morgenthau, "French Guinea's RDA Folk Songs," *West Africa Review* 29, 371 (Aug. 1958): 673–81.

57. Abu-Lughod, "Nationalism in a New Perspective," p. 44.

economic success of a number of socialist countries. The GEC initiated young Guineans into the fundamentals of Marxian praxis, discipline, and jargon, but perhaps not to a sophisticated analysis of the system; they popularized Marxism and fostered dogmatism, a process consistent with Stalinism and partly responsible for the autocratic forms of the PDG. Other reasons for the attraction of socialism included its opposition to the exploitation and alienation⁵⁸ inherent in capitalism and its justification of current hardship for future happiness.

As the country began to experience major economic difficulties in the early sixties, the government gave the monopoly of import and export trade to newly created state stores; it nationalized banks, insurance companies, transportation, and public utilities to reduce Guinea's reliance on French-controlled business. In March 1960, to accelerate the pace of economic decolonization, a national inconvertible currency, called the Guinean franc and later the *sily*, distinct from the French CFA franc used throughout Francophone Africa, was issued without any guarantee but "the will and trust of the people."⁵⁹ Economic programs were designed according to general socialist guidelines. A three-year plan of development to be financed mostly by foreign loans and assistance was formulated by an extraordinary party conference called in April 1960 to promote industrialization and higher agricultural productivity through modernization and collectivization.⁶⁰ Considered to be compatible with traditional African communalism, and to be able to foster economic development and national integration, socialist mystique and phraseology permeated Sékou Touré's writing and hence dominated the country's official cultural life.

Founded on an inherently unstable currency, this economic program was hastily planned and poorly executed. To worsen an already dreadful situation, agriculture, which should have been the backbone of the economy, experienced a steady decline, thus producing a major food shortage. Indeed, the pricing of crops for the benefit of the cities, the continued practice of buying local produce at low prices and selling imported goods at high prices, and the high cost of an inefficient industrial sector all accounted for the impoverishment of the peasants and their turning away from the economy. The factors that further aggravated the crisis included the breakdown of transport ser-

58. Capitalism has brought with it several forms of alienation: alienation of producers from the process of production; alienation of producers from the products of their work; alienation of workers from themselves; alienation of people from their fellows; and alienation from the environment.

59. Touré, "La monnaie guinéenne," in *L'Afrique*, pp. 330-37.

60. See Michael O'Connor, "Guinea and the Ivory Coast: Contrasts in Economic Development," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 10, 3 (1972): 409-16.

vices, the establishment of trade regulations and customs charges between regions, the instability of the currency,⁶¹ the inability to generate capital for investment from the state stores, and a fast-growing inflation rate. Therefore the black market became the rule, and class differentiation reached its apex, the prosperity of the ruling elite contrasting with the destitution of the ordinary populace.⁶² The near collapse of the economy (except the mining sector, which remained in the hands of the multinationals) and Guinea's long political isolation compelled Touré to embark on a different diplomacy.

To launch this diplomatic offensive, Guinea participated in a mediation commission to settle the Mali–Upper Volta border conflict (December 1974–March 1975). Under Touré's auspices, the heads of state of these two countries signed a permanent peace agreement in Conakry in July 1975. The travels associated with this peace effort gave the Guinean leaders living in a cocoon of suspicion and isolation the opportunity to see for the first time in many years how the world was changing. A question that agitated their minds, and that Touré had to answer, was how to explain Guinea's backwardness given that its political options were correct. More than ever, the focus had to be on economic development and the welfare of the people, as was dramatized by popular discontent and a women's uprising.⁶³ A dramatic move was needed to give Touré the image of a trusted statesman and to lure potential investors.

Through the United Nations secretary-general, Kurt Waldheim, and his assistant, the German-born French diplomat André Lewin, contacts were reestablished with West Germany and France, two countries with which Touré had broken diplomatic relations. Europeans imprisoned in Conakry for "participation in plots to overthrow the government" were released to pave the way to normal relations. Soon afterward, André Lewin left the service of the United Nations to become French ambassador to Guinea in 1976. A

61. For a consequence of the PDG trade system, see Claude Rivière, "Les bénéficiaires du commerce dans la Guinée pré-coloniale et coloniale," in *Bulletin de l'IFAN* 33 b (1971): 189. The suppression of internal trade reinforced autarchy and thereby worsened local economic conditions. The free flow and trade of major commodities, including grain and sugar, were forbidden within the country, while other goods were subject to prohibitive customs fees. This system exacerbated poverty.

62. See Kaba, "Cultural Revolution" and "Guinean Politics." To substantiate this point further, health care had completely deteriorated, and the members and friends of the rulers were flown to Europe and America for medical needs.

63. The Conakry women's uprising on 27 July 1977 was a turning point in the PDG's history. It was the culmination of similar movements in the regions against continuous repression by the militia, food shortage, poverty, and broken promises by Touré. A testimony to the government's loss of support in the country, it heralded a new era. Scholars have yet to expound the full significance of these events.

Franco-Guinean communiqué issued on 14 July 1976 stressed the need to bury the past, a move that culminated in full diplomatic relations in February 1977.⁶⁴ The resumption of ties with France facilitated reconciliation with presidents Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Léopold S. Senghor of Senegal under the auspices of President William Tolbert of Liberia in March 1978. Thereafter Touré raced like a whirlwind through Africa, the Middle East, and North America to seek economic cooperation and assistance.⁶⁵ The high point of the new diplomacy was a state visit to Guinea by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in December 1978, the first French leader to touch Guinean soil since de Gaulle's stormy visit in 1958.

This new diplomacy raised great expectations in Guinea, although it was unclear whether the capitalist countries were willing to pull her out of her twenty years of stagnation by investing in energy and other industrial projects. Moreover, it remained to be seen whether France would make Sékou Touré a favored partner at the expense of such steadfast allies as Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny. By March 1984 when Touré died while undergoing heart surgery in Cleveland, Ohio, Guinea had not yet received any substantial benefit from his new diplomacy, nor was there any genuine liberation from twenty-three years of totalitarian rule.

If one measures political success and performance by the longevity of the system, it is clear that the PDG achieved a great political success, due to its highly integrated organization and to the establishment of an effective police system. One has to go beyond such criteria, however, to evaluate a regime fully. Although the PDG had in fact controlled Guinea since 1956, it did not improve the economy significantly, despite the country's unusual potentialities. The poor state of the society raised serious questions about the managerial capacity of the leaders and the honesty and integrity of Touré and his team.⁶⁶ Many questions then may be legitimately raised about the nature of the Guinean regime. Both the language and elements of the PDG doctrine gave Touré a socialist outlook and reinforced the view that he aspired to carve such an image for himself by launching the psychological conditions for socialism and a program of cultural revolution in 1968.⁶⁷ After 1975, however, Islamic principles began to occupy a dominant place in Touré's thought, with his frequent analogies to the Prophet Muhammad's struggle to establish Islam as a universal, egalitarian, and democratic religion and his warnings against

64. See André Lewin, "Les relations franco-guinéennes," *Monde et culture* 40, 1 (1980).

65. See Kaba, "Guinea: Myth and Reality of Change," *Africa Report* (May–Jun. 1981).

66. This issue of integrity pertained to the use of the revenue received from diamond exploitation, the royalties paid by multinational mining companies, and the scope of corruption in the bureaucracy.

67. See Kaba, "Cultural Revolution" and "Guinean Politics."

the “invading specter of Satan.”⁶⁸ For him, class struggle and the struggle against the devil became identical. By 1980, as the PDG lost most of its popular appeal, he set Islamic committees to “safeguard Revolution and the interests of Man.”⁶⁹ His belief in Satan as the force in the counterrevolution and his recourse to religion, indicate another strand in his thinking.

The ideology of the PDG clearly appears as an ensemble of philosophical and moral generalizations stemming from different sources, and centering on such idealistic concepts as man, consciousness, harmony, and progress. Indeed, for Touré, “Socialist Revolution is an enlightened consciousness,”⁷⁰ a view relating politics and people’s happiness to metaphysics. For him, human aspirations became those of a fictitious individual—that is, a person who has been stripped of existential and sociological characteristics and given an ideal personality. The love of the generic *man* and *woman* justified the torture and sacrifice of true living beings, thus creating the conditions for dictatorship. The freedom of the citizens of Guinea was conditioned by the need and sovereignty of this ideal individual whose infallible self-appointed servant and spokesman was Touré himself. Such practices required neither people’s effective participation in the decision-making process and national wealth nor the establishment of autonomous mechanisms to resolve conflicts. Attaching more importance to ideas than to reality, Touré perceived himself as the “theoretician and voice of Africa’s consciousness,” the man of providence.

What was the nature of Guinean politics and ideology under the PDG? First, it would be an erroneous assumption, as has been shown, to consider the regime as being Marxist, despite the presence of many recurrent socialist themes. Touré was primarily an African nationalist who, trapped in the contradictions of his system and by his subsequent inability to identify properly even the economic priorities, let alone promote development, elaborated the argument of “permanent conspiracies” to explain his shortcomings and to justify autocracy and terror.⁷¹ His great contribution to the rise of an African ideology was to adapt Marxian terminology to nationalism and to radicalize it through an integrated political party. This made the ideology of Touré and his PDG an amalgam of Marxism, Africanism, populism, and idealism, the latter two components being dominant in its content. Guinea became a classic example of an idealist revolutionary state, because its leader’s main preoccupations were with rhetoric, contemplative ideas, excessive will power, and violence for its own sake rather than for a positive restructuring of the bases of

68. Expression often used by Sékou Touré and published in *Horoya*; heard on Guinean radio in 1977–1978.

69. Heard on Guinean radio, July–Aug. 1977.

70. Touré, *L’Afrique*, p. 173.

71. See Kondé, *La Guinée*.

the society. Thus, the system lacked the ideological consistency necessary for sure, viable socio-economic and political development. In other words, the transfer of power in Guinea, a remarkable achievement, gave birth to a new state and nation. Touré's death on 26 March 1984, after almost three decades of rule, and his failure to achieve the Guinean people's basic expectations for decent living conditions announced the dawn of a new era.

Sékou Touré having cultivated the image of a demiurge, the news of his death took Guinea by surprise. Another great surprise in the same week as his death was the swift and decisive change in national leadership on 3 April 1984, while all appeared calm under the PDG's firm control. On this date—a day before an extraordinary congress could elect a new president, the army officers, considered by most as weak and ineffective, seized power in a bloodless coup d'état under a military committee headed by then Colonel, now General Lansana Conté. While it may be premature to evaluate this regime's accomplishments, aside from its commitment to freedom and liberal economy, one may ask whether it can fill the vacuum left by Touré and meet the challenge of promoting development in a richly endowed but poorly managed country, of restoring human rights and democracy, and of establishing order and efficiency in a cumbersome, backward bureaucracy.⁷²

72. See Lansiné Kaba, "A New Era Dawns in Guinea," *Current History* (Apr. 1985).

10. *Transfer of Power in Nigeria: Its Origins and Consequences*

J. F. ADE. AJAYI AND A. E. EKOKO

We are concerned here with an analysis of the processes of the transfer of power from the British to Nigerians in the management of the government of Nigeria, during the period 1945–1960, and the resulting nature of the post-colonial state. This involves not just a study of the periodization of the British withdrawal and Nigerian takeover characterized by Dennis Austin as the changing balance of power between British officials and representatives of the local community;¹ it also settles the fundamental issues of who takes over the power: the pre-colonial traditional ruling classes or the new elites; the transformation of the colonial regime to the self-governing post-colonial state and the nature of that state; the allocation of power and resources between the center, the regions, and local areas of Nigeria; and, finally, the evolution of the new institutions—legislative, executive, judicial, and economic—to exercise the power so transferred. The various processes through which these problems were tackled were conditioned by the size and the diversity of the people and cultures of Nigeria, which make this case unique in the general pattern of post–World War II decolonization.

INITIAL MOVES: 1945–1948

It is sometimes claimed that the Richards Constitution of 1945 was promulgated purely on the initiative of the British to start the decolonization process. Decolonization is treated as a well-ordered program initiated in London

1. Bernard Schaffer, "The Concept of Preparation: Some Questions about Transfer of Systems of Government," *World Politics* 18, 1 (Oct. 1965): 42–67.

whereby British colonies were to be led to independence by a gradual process of emancipation;² and the process is regarded as imperial rather than African. Nationalist inputs, if they are admitted, are treated as mere reactions to colonial initiatives, and virtually irrelevant in the pace and direction of change. I. F. Nicolson claims that by the 1940s the question of the political future of British dependencies had been resolved “into a settled policy of decolonization and colonial independence . . . so no struggle for independence, no question of nationalists wresting power from reluctant but weakened imperialists in West Africa—all that belongs to mythology; the mythology of cold war reinforcing a mythology of African and other nationalisms. . . .”³ Contrary evidence, however, abounds. In spite of such oft-quoted statements of colonial secretaries that British policy aimed at “helping these people to stand a little bit more securely on their own feet” and “to guide the colonial people along the road to self-government,”⁴ no conscious British initiative to liquidate the empire was apparent from the Nigerian end.

Nationalist agitations in Nigeria antedated the outbreak of the Second World War. The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) founded in 1934 and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) established in 1943 were the most important political organizations through which the nationalists criticized the colonial administration and demanded constitutional progress toward self-rule before 1945. In this period the movement was urban based, led by the educated elite who operated through ethnic unions within the municipalities, trade unions, debating clubs, and old boys' associations such as those of King's College and Barewa College. In 1943 Dr. Azikiwe, one of the foremost Nigerian nationalists, told a friend in desperation that “Nigeria has very few friends in England so far as our political aspirations are concerned.”⁵ He had led the West African Press delegation to Britain in August 1943 with a memorandum demanding the introduction of representative government for ten years, to be followed by a fully responsible government for five years, after which complete independence should be attained. The memorandum evoked no response from the Colonial Office. The following month, when the colonial secretary visited Nigeria, the Nigerian Youth Movement submitted a memorandum demanding a British statement on the rights of colonial peoples to be brought within the spirit and letter of the Atlantic Charter.

2. Ibid.

3. I. F. Nicolson, “Nigeria: Wars Cold and Hot, and Lukewarm Ideas,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 22, 3 (Dec. 1976): 384.

4. See for example, David Goldworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics, 1945–61* (London, 1971), and Partha S. Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labor Movement, 1914–64* (New York, 1975).

5. James S. Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley, 1971), p. 241.

When Sir Arthur Richards became governor in 1943, there was thus already strong agitation from nationalist elements for constitutional reforms. The nationalists, using an increasingly sophisticated press, supported Britain and her Allies during the war as an investment for the future. The war created untold internal hardships for the Nigerian people and produced new forces that the nationalists were quick to harness. The fall of producer prices during the Great Depression of the 1930s had led to a mass migration into the cities, creating housing problems and unemployment. Food shortages during the war, high prices of imported consumer goods, punitive closure of schools, and conscription for tin production and military service all led to agitation by market women and others.⁶ The nationalists saw the service, suffering, and death of so many Nigerians in overseas war fronts as "our sacrifice":

For such our slaughtered sons on Burma's plains,
Have died that we more plenteous life may live.⁷

They expected the end of the war to bring political gains in constitutional reforms, greater facilities for education, Africanization of the civil service to cater for educationally qualified Africans, economic advancement, and the liberalization of the Native Authorities. The Richards Constitution did not provide answers to all these expectations. It had been handed down to the Legislative Council with discussions on it guillotined. Its contents and manner of presentation aroused nationalist condemnation and bitter criticism; its emphasis on Native Authorities failed to neutralize the politicians who took measures to break the constitution and retain the initiative in accelerating the pace of change.

The most outstanding feature of the 1945 constitution was the introduction of the regional concept into the Nigerian body politic. It provided for three regional Houses of Assembly. Elections to the houses were to be based on the existing Native Authorities, and each house was to elect five of its members to the Central Legislature in Lagos. But the powers of these houses were so circumscribed that they precluded effective Nigerian participation. Worse than that, the constitution took the retrogressive step of abolishing the elective franchise enjoyed by Lagos and Calabar since the Clifford Constitution of 1922. It was as if the answer to the new social forces and new awareness created by the war was to re-entrench colonialism.

Evidently, Sir Arthur misjudged the temper and underestimated the

6. W. O. Oyemakinde, "The Nigerian General Strike of 1945," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 7, 4 (Jun. 1975): 693-710; A. E. Ekoko, "Conscript Labour and Tin Mining in Nigeria During the Second World War," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 11, 3 (forthcoming); Bill Freund, *Capital and Labour in Nigerian Tin Mines* (London, 1981).

7. J. A. Iluyomade, "This New Seed," *The University Herald* (Ibadan) 1, 2 (1948).

strength of the nationalist and educated elites and their ability to mobilize the masses of the country. Even before the nationalist politicians could voice their bitter criticism of the constitution, an equally significant event, the general strike of 1945, broke out two months after the submission of the constitution to the Legislative Council in May. The trade unions demanded an increase of 50 percent in the cost of living allowance and a minimum daily wage of 2/6d. (25 kobo) in view of soaring prices of commodities attendant on the war. About thirty thousand railway, post and telegraph, and technical workers of government departments participated in the thirty-seven-day strike.

The constitution, the strike, and the much-criticized "obnoxious" ordinances⁸ severally and collectively evoked nationalist susceptibilities. The vehemence with which the press criticized the government on these three fronts led to the closure of some nationalist newspapers. But the terms of settlement of the strike were a victory for the workers and the nationalist cause; the feet of clay of the colonialists were exposed: they were vulnerable after all.

Nationalists of all shades were unanimous in their condemnation of the Richards Constitution, and most were determined to make it unworkable. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, reacting from London, said the constitution "retained some of the objectionable features of the old, contains unsavoury characteristics of its own and falls short of expectations."⁹ H. O. Davies, a moderate nationalist politician, regretted that the constitution merely provided for "discussion" and not genuine "participation" by Nigerians in the governance of their country, noting that the reform "is ingenious but unpalatable. The final test of constitutional progress is the extent to which this bureaucratic Leviathan is brought under the influence of public opinion. Until this is done the African will remain with a sense of frustration, not conducive to mutual trust or friendship now or in the future."¹⁰

Perhaps the most pervasive nationalist reaction to the Richards Constitution was the NCNC tour of Nigeria to seek the mandate of the masses behind the subsequent delegation to London to protest against the constitution. The tour whipped up even more nationalist sentiments throughout Nigeria, es-

8. Kalu Ezera, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria* (Cambridge, England, 1964), pp. 78-79. The ordinances were: (1) the Minerals Ordinance of 1945 under which "the entire property in and control of all minerals and mineral oils, in, under, or upon any lands in Nigeria and of all rivers, streams and water-courses throughout Nigeria, is and shall be vested in the Crown"; (2) the Public Lands Acquisition and (3) the Crown Lands (Amendment) Ordinance, which declared all public lands acquired by the government for public purposes, including those in the Protectorate to be Crown Lands; and (4) the Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs (Amendment) Ordinance, which empowered the governor to appoint and depose chiefs in the Protectorate.

9. Obafemi Awolowo, *Path to Nigerian Freedom* (London, 1947), p. 53.

10. Ezera, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, 77.

pecially in the north where the new “gospel” was preached openly perhaps for the first time. The tour yielded £13,000 from freewill donations of the growing urban population; the ensuing delegation registered the uncompromising stand of the articulate Nigerians. Sir Arthus Richards was becoming increasingly unpopular and made to typify the reactionary imperialist. As Kalu Ezera points out, it was during his regime that Nigerian nationalism was sharpened in order to meet the exploits of an administrator who ruled with an iron hand.¹¹ Soon London decided that the time had come to recall Richards.

THE NEW PERSPECTIVES, 1948–1953

In 1948 Sir John Macpherson replaced Richards as the governor of Nigeria. There were similar administrative reshuffles in other West African colonies, but in Nigeria the nationalists generally believed that Macpherson would be more accommodating than his predecessor. The 1945 constitution was scheduled to last for nine years, but in 1948, after barely three years, the new governor announced that the constitution was to be replaced because “the progress already made has been . . . so rapid and so sound. . . .”¹² This was an obvious masking of what in fact was a complete change in policy. It was a reversal in view of the fact that a few months before, on his arrival, Macpherson had announced that he was convinced that the constitution was off to a “first rate start.”

That the British government decisively yielded to nationalist pressure and announced plans for a new constitution cannot be disputed, although some historians tend to see these new perspectives in terms of initiatives from London. Kalu Ezera surprisingly writes that “the new initiatives came as a calculated policy strategy from the Colonial Office.”¹³ Sir Hugh Foot, who assumed duty in 1947 in Nigeria as chief secretary to the government of Macpherson, recalled a 1948 conference in Government House:

We viewed the whole political situation: we took into account the disorders and changes in what was then the Gold Coast. We came to the conclusion that we must at once take a new initiative. The Legislative Council was to meet in August. That seemed to be the best time to make an announcement. A recommendation was made by telegram to the Colonial Office. There was a quick reply.¹⁴ [Italics added.]

11. Ibid., p. 81.

12. Governor Macpherson was addressing the Legislative Council on 17 August 1948; quoted by Coleman, *Background to Nationalism*, p. 311.

13. Ezera, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, p. 82.

14. Quoted by I. F. Nicolson, *The Administration of Nigeria, 1900 to 1960* (London, 1969), p. 134.

Commenting on this, I. F. Nicolson says that “taking and holding the initiative” had, by the time of his Nigerian appointment, become in Hugh Foot “almost a conditioned reflex.”¹⁵ In self-adulation Foot himself says the 1948 initiative was taken “not to allow frustration to set in. Not to allow opposition to bank up. The people must be given a lead, a hope, an assurance that orderly and constructive effort will be worthwhile. . . . Everything depends, on a clear lead and sense of urgency.”¹⁶ That the political climate of 1948 required “a sense of urgency” cannot be disputed, but the claim that the initiative was “not in response to public pressure but in advance of it” is not only ridiculous but also illogical. As Nicolson himself admits, “To have deferred constitutional reform would have required a degree of direct moral and financial support for official rule which the British Government had never been able to provide—even in the days of Chamberlain and of expansion.”¹⁷

It should be recalled that Macpherson’s original political program was to “democratize” the Native Authority system to make it attractive for educated Nigerians. Therefore London’s acceptance of constitutional reform was a major shift in policy and a demonstration of the impact of nationalist activities between 1945 and 1948: the activities of Azikiwe and his press; his alleged assassination plot, the Bristol Hotel incident, and the formation of the United Front Committee to fight racial discrimination; the NCNC nationwide tour that set the nation politically agog; and the protest delegation to London and the refusal of NCNC representatives to occupy their seats at the Legislative Council. Moreover, the Zikists demonstrated extremist radicalism: their position was to tear up the whole constitution so that the nationalists could dictate a higher velocity for political evolution. All these and the doggedness with which the workers conducted the 1945 strike could not but make a strong impression on the Colonial Office.

Only in March 1948 did the NCNC lift the embargo placed on their representatives in the Legislative Council and pledge to “co-operate in order to hasten the day when this country shall have attained to a state when her people shall exercise full political responsibility.”¹⁸ Azikiwe spoke of his waned faith in Britain and threatened violence: “Freedom for Nigeria and the Cameroons can no longer be expected to descend on us easily without tremendous sacrifice. . . .”¹⁹ James Coleman is therefore nearer the mark when he concludes that “there can be no doubt that Azikiwe and the NCNC . . . compelled both the imperial and colonial governments to accelerate sharply the tempo of that

15. Ibid.

16. Hugh Foot, *A Start in Freedom* (London, 1964), p. 106.

17. Nicolson, *Administration of Nigeria*, p. 254.

18. *Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe* (London, 1964), p. 104.

19. Ibid., p. 165.

[positive political] development.”²⁰ This does not belie the influence of the Gold Coast riots, for as Colin Cross has noted they marked “the beginning of the end of British rule in West Africa.” Harold Cooper, a former colonial official, said graphically: “We were living in a dream world until the disorders of 1948 catapulted us into wakefulness.”²¹ But this neighborly influence was important only in so far as it took place in the midst of demonstrable dissatisfaction with the Richards Constitution within Nigeria itself. In deciding to break the constitution, the nationalists, not the imperial and colonial governments, took and held the initiative.

London reacted by circumventing Zikism and radicalism and issued new directives that challenged the politicians to get their new mandates from the Native Authorities. British tactics demanded consultations at grassroot levels; the center of nationalist political gravity was thereby moved away from Lagos to Kaduna, Enugu, Ibadan, and the provinces, thus provincializing nationalist political activities and agitations.

The call for grassroot politics engendered consultation and facilitated the political awakening of the masses of the people in all corners of the country, heightening the process of nationalist legitimation. For the time being, however, grassroot politics were diversionary and deliberately divisive. Diversionary because nationalist activities were forced from the center to the periphery, and deliberately divisive because the British expected a showdown between the erstwhile powerful traditional, conservative class who still wielded “residual authority” in the Native Authorities and were largely pro-British, and the educated political class who thrust upon themselves the mantle of leadership under the emergent dispensation. This expected confrontation was particularly potent because the colonialists drew a new line of battle for the two political groups. Coleman has noted that “every governor of Nigeria since Lugard had explicitly rejected this possibility”²² (of placing centrally minded nationalists over traditional leaders of the Native Authority system). One of the unspoken assumptions of the nationalist struggle in Nigeria was an undeclared war between the forces of tradition and conservatism and those of social change, modernity, and democracy.

As long ago as 1938, the influential Lord Hailey had warned against the use of Native Authorities as the bases for political advancement in British African Colonies. He described them as “an extension of the executive power for the

20. Coleman, *Background to Nationalism*, p. 310.

21. For the impact on British decolonization of the Gold Coast riots, see George Woodcock, *Who Killed the British Empire?* (London, 1974), p. 317; Colin Cross, *The Fall of the British Empire, 1918–68* (London, 1969), p. 270; Harold Cooper, “Political Preparedness for Self-Government,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* (July 1956): 72.

purpose of local government.”²³ Therefore, if Native Authorities could not be used as the basis of political evolution, another basis must be found: parliamentary institutions. But the parliamentary institutions that Macpherson hoped to work out through the promised constitutional review were now predicated on the discredited NAs and therefore on the traditional elite.

The nationalists were equal to the British diversionary tactics. They insisted on attaining power at the center and forced the British to give up the idea of working for “evolution” from the bottom upward. To Chief Awolowo the succession of the educated elite to the position of power was something of a divine command. “It is their heritage. It is they who must be trained in the art of government. . . . The educated minority in each ethnic group are the people who are qualified by natural rights to lead their fellow nationals into higher political developments.”²⁴ To drive the point home he served notice to the British, on behalf of the educated nationalist politicians, that “only an insignificant minority have any political awareness. . . . It must be realised now and for all time that this articulate minority are destined to rule the country.”²⁵ From 1948 on there was a new emphasis upon winning the goodwill of all educated Africans. Africanization of the senior sector of the civil service was to be accelerated, and the educated classes were thus progressively co-opted into the colonial system.

The British challenge for grassroot politics had an electrifying impact on the methods and type of politics, and politicians, that emerged. The year 1948 has generally been regarded as a turning point toward rapid decolonization in British West Africa; but in Nigeria it turned ominously for the future political development of the colonial state. Hitherto the nationalist movement was essentially a “national” movement, at least in its cohesion and orientation. Once the British unveiled their long-term strategy of conceding office to the nationalists, even without corresponding power, they succeeded in keeping the nationalist politicians busy creating the instruments with which to acquire the power. Thus, the emergence of political parties as the vehicles for competition for power threatened the base of nationalist solidarity as it fostered the development of subnational nationalisms. Between 1948 and 1951 subnationalism or ethnicity became the pragmatic instrument for bolstering group interests in the game of party politics. This resulted in the regionalization of the nationalist movement and kept the politicians quarreling among themselves most of the time. Regionally based political parties emerged to fight

22. Coleman, *Background to Nationalism*, p. 272.

23. F. J. Pedler, *Main Currents of West African History, 1940–78* (London, 1979), p. 4.

24. Awolowo, *Path to Nigerian Freedom*, pp. 63–64, which may be viewed as Awolowo’s response to the Richards Constitution.

25. *Ibid.*; see also Basil Davidson, *Africa in Modern History* (London, 1978), p. 197.

regional battles; unity against British colonialism was hardly within the bounds of possibility, and British strategy and policies promoted these antagonistic tendencies.

The NCNC was reorganized to make it more effective in the new power game, but what emerged looked more like the Igbo State Union in a political garb. Yoruba nationalist leaders began to accuse Zik and the NCNC of fighting for the promotion of Igbo hegemony. The emergence of the Action Group (AG), on the foundation already laid by the Nigerian Youth Movement and the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, was largely a Yoruba reaction to fears of Igbo domination. The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) was founded as a party of the north for the northerners. These groups produced first a north-south dichotomy and then a tripartite competition for scarce sociopolitical resources. The north saw in the unfolding political landscape a topography of southern domination of the administrative cadre and the economy because of their sociohistoric privileges and advantages of Western education. The South on the other hand could sense a deadly collaboration between the receding colonialism that British officials represented and the steadfast conservatives of the northern emirates to capture political power at the center to the detriment of the more educated south. Between the two southern regions there was no love lost; keen competition for employment and other economic resources continually fouled their mutual relationships, perceptions, images, and attitudes.

Given the height of mutual suspicion, the acidity of ethnic rivalry, and political ill will, the opportunities of structural engineering that constitution making offered from 1951 were turned into the field for infighting and the means for the attainment of political power rather than the chance for building the foundations of a stable and viable post-colonial state. For example, the committee stage of the Ibadan Conference of 1950 on constitutional review had recommended 45 : 33 : 33 as the quotas for representation at the center for the north, east, and west. But the Emir of Zaria, who was on the northern delegation, made it clear that "unless the Northern region was allotted 50 per cent of the seats at the Central Legislature it would ask for separation from the rest of Nigeria on the arrangements existing before 1914."²⁶ The north was not ready for compromise; it demanded conditions, and northern conditions became British conditions. Thus "they [the British officials] were valuable allies of Northern leaders at a critical juncture";²⁷ the southern leaders conversely

26. Quoted by T. M. Tamuno, "Separatist Agitations in Nigeria since 1914," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 8, 4 (1970); 563–84.

27. James O'Connell, "The Fragility of Stability: The Fall of the Nigerian Federal Government in 1966," in Robert Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui, eds., *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1979), pp. 1012–34.

were working from a position of comparative disadvantage: divided, mistrusting, and anxious for power, they became less critical and tended to make compromises to resolve immediate crises sometimes at the expense of long-term objectives.

Political discussions from 1948 to 1951 culminated in the institution of the Macpherson Constitution of 1951. It provided for a central legislature, three regional legislatures, and three councils of ministers. Essentially, it was a federal constitution with a strong center, but it was still far from nationalist expectations. They criticized the continued use of indirect elections in some parts of the country, the entrenchment of elements of traditional authority, and the failure to concede truly representative and responsible government. It was, in the words of Thomas Hodgkin, "a compromise between nationalist demands for political independence or 'Dominion status' and the views of the colonial office, the British Administration, and the more conservative sections of Nigerian opinion anxious to retain as much as possible of the realities of British power."²⁸

The 1951 compromise engendered a breach of confidence between the British and the more articulate nationalist politicians; and the 1952 census in which, as O'Connell alleges,²⁹ the British deliberately minimized the south to give political leverage to the north, did not help matters. Nationalist tactics were to use the Macpherson Constitution to achieve more political power and then to use that power to breach the constitution as soon as feasible. Dr. Azikiwe and the NCNC had hoped to secure parliamentary majority in the east, west, and center so as to paralyze the machinery of government: this was expected to lead to a reformulation of the constitution. But in the indecisive elections in the western region Zik was outmaneuvered from gaining a seat in the central legislature. He became instead opposition leader in the western House of Assembly. The cumulative effect was an internal crisis in the NCNC. While NCNC ministers at the center were ready to give the constitution a trial, the nonministerial leadership of the party wanted to break it without delay. The ministers were expelled from the party in December 1952. When Zik moved to the east in 1953 to re-establish his base, a regional crisis of equal significance was also created. Chief Dennis Osadebey commented on the Zik-Eyo Ita crisis of 1953 that "Ministers in the Eastern Region began to ignore directives from the NCNC, they started handling government matters not as NCNC wanted but as they liked."³⁰ These NCNC ministers represented a new

28. T.L. Hodgkin, "Towards Self-Government in British West Africa," *The New West Africa* (London, 1954), p. 72.

29. O'Connell, "Fall of the Nigerian Federal Government."

30. Quoted by A. C. N. Nwaubani, "Towards a Re-interpretation of Some Issues on Nigerian Nationalism," unpublished Ibadan M.A. diss., 1983, p. 180. See also Richard L. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties* (New York, 1965), pp. 116-24.

coalescence of southern commercial and financial interest groups with NPC leadership at the center. The NPC connection yielded economic dividends; power sharing became a temptation, even a strategy in the constitutional progression. The mainstream of NCNC leadership, however, realized that the struggle with imperialism did not terminate with the appointment of Nigerian ministers. The fight had merely changed its color, and new strategies were required.

The Action Group on the other hand saw the 1951 dispensation as demanding "of Nigerian leaders a change of tactics and the cultivation of a new phase of nationalism, namely the constructive phase. It was no longer opposition to British rule that was required but a test of the readiness and fitness of Nigerians to manage their own affairs."³¹ In the west, therefore, there was a demand for more substantial powers for regional ministers and the leader of government business. Ministers arrived before there were ministries to receive them; they bitterly resented being told not to interfere with the civil service.³² Regional ministers had no power and no authority over the public service. As Chief E. A. Babalola, the first minister for public works in the western region, recalled,

When I assumed duty as Minister in February in 1952, the Director of Public Works assigned me a small room. I objected most seriously. When I reported the insult to the Leader of Government, Chief Awolowo, he told me the same treatment was meted to everyone of us by British officials.³³

There was bound to be conflict between the Action Group and the British administration. The party declared a policy of nonfraternization with Sir John Macpherson. Under the 1952 Local Government Reform the positions of the residents and the district officers, hitherto the pillars of British administration in the field,³⁴ were abolished.

Opposition to the Macpherson Constitution was, as expected, least articulated in the north. There were local government reforms there that admitted of "just a little widening of the membership of the Councils which advised the *sarakuna*, by the inclusion of educated people and of representatives of non-Muslim communities,"³⁵ and which paralleled developments in the south.

31. Awolowo, *Awo, The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo* (London, 1960), p. 217.

32. Nicolson, *The Administration of Nigeria*, p. 276.

33. E. A. Babalola, *My Life Adventure* (Ibadan, 1978), p. 159.

34. *Western Region of Nigeria Local Government Law* (Ibadan, 1952); E. A. Gboyega, "Local Government and Political Integration in Western State," unpublished Ibadan Ph.D. diss., 1972.

35. B. A. Ikara, "The 1976 Local Government Reforms as an Aspect of Nigeria's Political Culture," in J. F. Ade. Ajayi and B. A. Ikara, eds., *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria* (Ibadan, 1985), pp. 147-72; Pedler, *Main Currents of West African History*, p. 23.

However, in the most determined effort to break the 1951 constitution—the self-government motion of 1953—the south was solidly united against the north. Two Action Group ministers resigned at the center, and anti-south riots broke out in Kano.

By mid-1953 the constitution had undergone much strain; the restiveness of the constitution breakers was beginning to pay off again. Within a year of experimentation, its deficiencies and structural malformations became glaring. The colonial secretary publicly accepted the inadequacies of the closely knit federal constitution of 1951 and called for a review “to provide for greater regional autonomy and for the removal of the power of intervention by the centre in matters which can, without detriment to other regions, be placed entirely within regional competence.”³⁶ Consequently, constitutional conferences were held in London and Lagos to attain these objectives.

THE ERA OF REGIONAL POLITICS, 1954–1959

British administrators and the nationalist politicians shared the overriding commitment to maintaining Nigeria as a political unit. At the time when the French were planning to devolve power not to the French West African (AOF) and French Equatorial African (AEF) federations but to the component units, and when it was obvious that they would have preferred the British to do the same in Nigeria, the British remained firm on the need to keep Nigeria together. Any attempt of the British to act like the French would have united the Nigerian politicians against them. They were able to retain some initiative in the pace and direction of the transfer of power only through a minimum of commitment to the Nigerian federation, which enabled them to play the role of arbiter among competing Nigerian politicians seeking power. The Nigerian politicians for their part, while seeking to consolidate their power over their respective regions, did not lose sight of the possibilities of controlling the federal center as well. Their ability to retain the initiative in the march to self-government rested on the extent to which they could achieve agreement among themselves without recourse to the British as arbiters. Such an agreement could only be reached within the framework of a united Nigeria. Thus, both the British officials and the Nigerian politicians agreed that a federal system was the only realistic solution to the problems of sheer size, ethnic diversity, and historical experiences in Nigeria.

As Adebayo Adedeji has observed, however, “a federal system of government is a result of compromise. It is a compromise between centrifugal and centripetal forces. It rests on a particular attitude on the part of the peoples of

36. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*, p. 132.

federating units who desire union but not unity.”³⁷ The London and Lagos deliberations, and the 1954 constitution itself, were a testimony to this assertion. The conferences represented the first active involvement of the regionally based political parties in determining the structural edifice of the emerging federation. In many ways the Lyttleton Constitution that emerged was a primary stage in the evolution of Nigerian federalism when three separate regions came together to devolve specified and limited powers to a central organization. Residual powers were vested in the regional governments. Each region was to have its own constitution, premier, governor, public service, judiciary, and marketing boards. It stopped short of regionalizing the army, police, and external relations. But it allowed the different regions to achieve self-government at different times and did not bar external representation to self-governing regions that desired it.

At that juncture regionalism was completely institutionalized, and the nationalist movement became regionalized. Each region was dominated by a party that drew its main support from one home ethnic base and peripheral support from minorities elsewhere. The nationalist leaders chose to become regional premiers and hence regional leaders. Politics at the national level became politics of deputies looking to their regional leaders for policies and directives. Each region was also a proto-federation, being an agglomeration of many ethnic groups, one ruling majority group surrounded by several ruled minorities. At the national level each political party tried to show that it represented and fought for the interests of all the peoples in the region, thus playing down the issue of minorities. At the regional level, however, politics was dominated by the center-periphery political syndrome. Thus, in the west dominated by Yoruba AG, the non-Yoruba Edo, Urhobo, Isoko, and western Igbo peoples tended to rally round the NCNC as the party capable of “liberating” them from AG oppression. Similarly, the Ijo, Efik, Ibibio, and Ogoja peoples of the east saw the NCNC as a vehicle of Igbo economic and political domination and tended to look to the AG for support in their struggle for liberation. In the vast north, with even greater ethnic diversity, the peoples of the middle belt had to seek their salvation outside the framework of the NPC, which they viewed as the instrument of their oppression by the Hausa-Fulani oligarchy working through the Native Authorities.³⁸

Aside from the 1954 constitutional provisions, the nature of the Nigerian

37. Adebayo Adedeji, “Federalism and Development Planning in Nigeria, in Alison A. Ayida and H. M. A. Onitiri, eds., *Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria* (Ibadan, 1971), p. 103.

38. J. Tseayo, *Conflict and Incorporation in Nigeria: The Integration of the Tiv* (Zaria, 1975); J. D. Y. Peel, *Ijesha and Nigeria: The Incorporation of a Yoruba Kingdom, 1890–1970* (London, 1983); and Remi Anifowose, *Violence and Politics in Nigeria: The Tiv and Yoruba Experience* (New York, 1982).

economy seemed designed to promote regionalism. During the colonial period, little had been done to promote economic interdependence. There were some migrant laborers and colonies of “strangers” in several of the large cities. They exerted some influence on policy, but not enough to stem the tide of regionalism. Rather, each region developed different crops that were exported and marketed abroad under British auspices. The economic well-being of the western region was a function of cocoa. The cocoa-producing areas rallied to support the party in power in the expectation of beneficial cocoa policies. The same was true of palm produce in the east and of groundnuts and cotton in the north. Inevitably, the marketing boards were regionalized, and revenue derived from the regional boards formed the core of regional funds for development. Thus each region was separately linked with the metropole and the world economy. The boom in producer prices associated with the Korean War (1950–1953) accelerated the pace of rural capital accumulation. Rural capitalists in each region openly aligned with the regional government to protect and promote their economic interests.

This regional approach to the economy made the question of allocating national revenue among the regions a crucial problem. The search for the most equitable formula has continued to bedevil Nigerian politics. At the Ibadan Conference in 1950, the north favored *population*, the west *derivation*, and the east *need* as the basis of the formula. The trend toward political regionalism and the existing regional pattern of the economy had strengthened the arguments in favor of derivation, and Sir Louis Chick’s Commission, asked to arbitrate on the matter, was directed by the constitutional conference “to ensure that the principle of derivation is followed to the fullest degree compatible with meeting the reasonable needs of the centre and each of the Regions.”³⁹ As Adebayo Adedeji has commented, by 1957 this endorsement of the principle of derivation had

poisoned inter-governmental relationships and had exacerbated intergovernmental rivalry and conflict. Perhaps more than any other single factor it had hampered the development of a sense of national unity or common citizenship in Nigeria. . . . Moreover its application has been arbitrary and lacking in consistency. . . . The whole financial arrangements have inhibited the development of an effective, development-oriented national fiscal policy.⁴⁰

Next to the constitutional and financial arrangements, perhaps the most vexed issue of Nigerian politics in the process of decolonization concerned the

39. Quoted by Okwudiba Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (Enugu, 1978), pp. 203–04.

40. Adebayo Adedeji, *Nigerian Federal Finance* (London, 1979), p. 254.

gradual replacement of British officials by qualified Nigerians. The training and recruitment of Nigerians for responsible positions in the civil service, higher education, judiciary, police, and army in preference to expatriates had been a major plank in the nationalist platform. Since 1948, this had been accepted under the Nigerianization program as a matter of national priority. Side by side with the economic benefits that decolonization conferred on members of the ruling elites, Nigerianization created vast opportunities for personal and professional advancement, wider horizons, and social mobility.⁴¹ This encouraged a wide expansion of education throughout the country. This expansion, being faster in the southern regions, widened the gap between the north and the south, but even the conservative structures in the north became increasingly adaptive to the new challenges.

With the pressure for regionalism, Nigerianization soon ceased to be an issue between the Nigerians and the British and became yet another cause of dissension among Nigerians. The constitutional conference of 1953 decided that from October 1954 the civil service and judiciary be regionalized. In addition to the federal civil service and judiciary, each region would have its own civil service and judiciary. The army, police, external service, and national parastatals (such as the Nigerian Railways, Electricity Corporation, Airways, and the Port Authority) were to remain under federal control. Personnel in the existing civil service and judiciary had to choose either regional or federal service. Several serving officers had to move from different parts of the country to return to their own regional services. To assuage the fears and anxieties of senior British civil servants they were promised lump-sum compensation⁴² up to a maximum of £9,000 on retirement and new promotion posts for those who chose to remain under the changed ministerial control.

Each regional government hastened to recruit and post indigenous officers to sensitive decision-making positions. Thus, in both the eastern and western regions, experienced teachers and other professionals were appointed as permanent secretaries or other senior administrative officers, while expatriates were left in teaching and other less sensitive areas. Within the two regions, the main problem was the balance between officers from the majority and minority areas. There was a marked shortage of indigenous trained manpower in the northern region, however, owing to colonial policy and restricted access to Western education in an effort partly to "protect" Islam and partly to

41. S. O. Osoba, "The Nigerian 'Power' Elite, 1952-61: A Study in Some Problems of Social Change," paper presented to the 16th annual congress of the Historical Society of Nigeria (Dec. 1970); S. O. Osoba and A. Fajana, "Educational and Social Developments," in Obara Ikime, ed., *Groundwork of Nigerian History* (Ibadan, 1980), pp. 570-600.

42. Nicolson, *The Administration of Nigeria*, p. 282; Ezera, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, p. 239.

use education to strengthen the position of rulers and avoid the premature emergence of an "educated proletariat."⁴³ While a vigorous northern scholarship program was embarked upon, a northernization policy was declared under which expatriate British officials were to be recruited in preference to eligible southerners whenever a northerner was not available. In addition, available northerners were carefully groomed and given rapid promotions in the northern service to prepare them for promotion into strategic and sensitive positions in the federal services. Posts considered strategic had to be held by a northerner to allay the fears of southern domination and encourage the north to agree to move toward self-government. Where a northerner was not available, Nigerianization was delayed. Side by side with this was the intense rivalry between easterners and westerners, with accusations and counter accusations of discrimination and nepotism.

In the circumstances, the southern politicians seem to have played into the hands of the British administrators by their decision to press the self-government motion to its logical conclusion and accept internal self-government for the two regions ready for it in 1956. For, while it meant that the momentum for self-government could no longer be stopped or unduly delayed, it meant also that the Nigerian politicians had lost the initiative in determining the character of the post-colonial state. The anomalous consequence was that from 1956–1959, while the self-governing eastern and western regions were busy consolidating the power of the respective governing parties, the northern region and the federal government remained under the control of colonial officials. The overall supervision of the decolonization process enabled British officials to ensure that in those years imperial British and northern interests were aligned. British administrators ensured first that northern control over the northern region and the federal government and its agencies was carefully planned and consolidated and, second, that the southern parties could not sustain an alliance against the Northern People's Congress (NPC).

The attempt of the Nigerian politicians to use the framework of the 1954 constitution as a basis for a renewed call to unity was immediately shattered by the stalemate over the position of Lagos. The Action Group had threatened that the west would secede if Lagos were not kept as an integral part of the region. The east had argued that although Lagos was a Yoruba town, there was substantial immigration into Lagos from all parts of the country and investment of federal capital in the ports and industries; furthermore, the concentration of the nation's economic, political, and administrative infrastructure there was such that Lagos should be administered as a separate federal

43. There is a fuller treatment of this theme in P. K. Tibenderana, "The Emirs and the Spread of Western Education in Northern Nigeria, 1910–46," *Journal of African History* 24, 4 (1983): 517–34.

territory, even if it meant disenfranchising the original Yoruba inhabitants. The NPC had initially been sympathetic to the arguments of the AG over Lagos, but following the harassment of NPC legislators after the self-government motion in 1953, the NPC had embraced the arguments of the NCNC over the issue. The constitutional conference had resolved the impasse by asking the British to arbitrate, and all parties agreed to accept the result of the arbitration. Predictably, the British supported the NPC in agreeing with the NCNC over the matter.

Both the AG and the NCNC went on to consolidate their respective regions. They each built up effective civil services of which any independent country could be proud. They pursued local-government reform, embarked on improved health and educational services and universal primary education. First the NCNC and then the AG began to make plans for a regional university. While the respective civil services became more efficient and much more responsive to the nationalist will, the federal government began to suffer from the anxieties of the colonial officials who remained in charge. Largely to sidetrack this, both regions made a case for appointing agents-general in London along the lines of the Australian states.

One aspect of this regionalization of the nationalist movement was the effort of the dominant regional majorities to create the impression that each party was a champion of the various ethnic groups in the region, and that the federation that emerged represented a coming together of all ethnic groups in the country to achieve not only national self-government but also self-determination for each group.⁴⁴ With regional self-government and approaching national self-government, however, the fears and feeling of insecurity of the minority groups became increasingly an issue. The conscious attempt of the majority groups to play down these fears was part of the strategem. The issue of minorities became an enduring category in the Nigerian political system and common to all three regions. Following the 1957 constitutional conference, a commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Willinck, a former minister of the British cabinet, to examine the problem. It recognized that the problem was real but recommended inactivity on the grounds that it could not be solved by constitutional provisions, and not without postponing the date for independence. The constitutional argument for the creation of more states to reduce the imbalance of a three-regional structure in which each region was powerful enough to threaten secession was ignored. Thus the minority issue, neglected by the British and the political class of the majority ethnic groups prior to 1960, became acute in the post-colonial era. All that the minorities gained was the promise of a long list of

⁴⁴ Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, devotes much space to the consequences of the regionalization of the nationalist movement. See pp. 158–66.

fundamental human rights to be included in the independence constitution. So the Willinck Commission lost a golden opportunity to create a balanced federal structure that should have sustained the post-colonial state.

Jide Aluko⁴⁵ suggests that the British refusal to create more states, and in the process whittle down the domineering political position of the northern region within the Nigerian federation, was motivated by desire to maintain the hegemony of the north in the post-independence politics as a moderating conservative influence. Similarly, Mackintosh⁴⁶ felt that British officials may well have regarded northern leaders as the best hope for achieving stability in the country and for preserving cordial relations with the British. Certainly the failure to create more states represented success for the strategy of British officials and a diminution of the victory Nigerian politicians achieved on the coming of independence. It took the military intervention of 1966 and the ensuing crisis of Biafra for the federal military government to realize that the minorities could not be safely marginalized. By 1967, the political class was ready to admit that "in our common desire to win independence, many vital problems were left unsolved. One of these outstanding problems was the creation of more states which would have provided a more lasting foundation for stability of the federation of Nigeria."⁴⁷ Thus were created the twelve states that were further adjusted into the nineteen-state structure in 1976.

THE FINAL STAGES: 1959–1963

The general elections of 1959 were critical for the transfer of power in Nigeria. They were the last to be conducted by the colonial administration and determined the inheritors of power in 1960. Before the elections two constitutional conferences held in London in 1957 and 1958 made adjustments to the maturing federation. The Federal Legislature was to be bicameral with a House of Representatives and a Senate, and the office of prime minister was created at the federal level to replace the leader of government business. Universal adult suffrage for the east and the west, and adult male suffrage for the north, were accepted as the basis for compiling a register of electors. Except for minor changes in the legislative list, the relative powers of the center and the regions remained unchanged.

Thus the structural imbalance of the federation, and the 1952 census on which electoral constituencies for the 1959 elections were based, give tremendous political leverage to the north. The north was allocated 174 seats in

45. Olajide Aluko, "Politics of Decolonization in British West Africa," in J. F. Ade. Ajayi and Michael Crowder, eds., *History of West Africa*, vol. 2 (London, 1974), p. 642.

46. John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics* (London, 1966), p. 32.

47. Federal Ministry of Information, *The Struggle for One Nigeria* (Lagos, 1967), p. 3.

In July 1960 Nigerian political leaders once again traveled to London to finalize the constitution on which independence would be based. The main innovations of the 1960 document were the provision for an exclusive federal list, itemizing forty-four federal functions, and special and emergency powers of the federal government. As the northern leaders became more certain of their ability to dominate the federal government, they were ready, while preserving the power of the regions, to give the federal government powers to curb the excesses of any errant region. Next was the spelling out of the concurrent legislative list where federal and regional governments could enact laws. All matters not included in the two lists belonged to the regions. As a matter of compromise, police and the judiciary were put on the concurrent list. Fundamental human rights were entrenched in the constitution, and there was provision for complicated procedures to be observed in the creation of new states.

48. Ken W. J. Post, *The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959* (London, 1963), is the authoritative work on the subject; see also O. B. C. Nwoli, "Theory and Practice of Democratic Elections: A Critique of the Nigerian Experience," in U. B. Uba, ed., *Democracy and Nation Development: 1983 and Beyond*, Proceedings of the 10th Annual Conference of the N.P.S.S. (Nsukka, 1984).

49. The information on the Defense Pact is based on O. Ojedokun, "The Anglo-Nigerian Entente and its Demise, 1960-62," *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies* 9, 3 (Nov. 1971): 210-33. See also Gordon Idang, "The Politics of Nigerian Foreign Policy: The Ratification of the Anglo-Nigerian Defense Agreement," *African Studies Review* 13, 2 (Sept. 1970): 227-51.

arrangements tended to favor Britain and to increase further Britain's already dominant position in the neocolonial Nigerian economy.

The agitation against the Defense Pact was also directed at Nigeria's special constitutional relations with the British Crown. It is interesting to note that this wave of "republican nationalism" coincided with the crisis that split the AG, the ruling party in the west. The crisis was exploited by the NPC and the NCNC in an attempt to destroy the opposition. From a state of emergency the Balewa federal government proceeded to install a client government under Chief S. L. Akintola in the western region. Chief Awolowo, leader of the majority faction of the AG, was jailed for treasonable felony. Alhaji Adegbenro, who contested the premiership with Akintola, took the matter to the Supreme Court and lost. He appealed to the Privy Council. As Akintola's son writes:

Adegbenro was successful, even though it took a whole year before the Privy Council judged in Awolowo's favour. Nevertheless, the Privy Council's decision had no consequence on the events in Nigeria. It was merely an academic decision, and in any event, Samuel Ladoke [Akintola] had foreseen the decision and taken steps to make a constitutional amendment that would effectively contradict the decision of the Privy Council.⁵⁰

Although it was Adegbenro's case that provided Balewa with the opportunity to sever the right of appeal to the Privy Council, other actions of the government showed that it was also bowing to the tide of the republican nationalism of the time. The partnership agreements with National Shipping Line and Nigerian Airways were terminated; the statutory 80 percent backing for the Central Bank of Nigeria's currency in British-held sterling balances was amended; and state corporations and companies were instructed "to ensure that apart from minimum working balances required to finance their day to day commitments overseas, the whole of their surplus monies are repatriated for use in Nigeria."⁵¹ As part of the policy of dismantling the special relations with Britain, Nigeria became a federal republic, and the British monarch ceased to be the Nigerian head of state in October 1963. All constitutional and institutionalized links with Britain were formally terminated by the Republican Constitution, in which a ceremonial president performed the functions of the governor-general and the British sovereign. The processes of the transfer of power which began in 1948 were virtually complete. These policy

50. S. L. Akintola, *Akintola: The Man and the Legend* (Enugu, 1982), p. 95.

51. Quoted by Ojedokun, "Anglo-American Entente." See also Ojedokun, "The Changing Pattern of Nigeria's International Economic Relations; The Decline of the Colonial Nexus, 1960-66," *Journal of Developing Areas* 6 (4 July 1972): 535-54.

and constitutional changes during 1962–1963 were immediately reflected in Nigeria's re-orientation of foreign policy. Nigeria became more committed to the African continent, more involved in the nonaligned movement, and made overtures to the Eastern bloc.

THE NATURE OF THE POST-COLONIAL STATE

In this study we have shown that the political initiatives for decolonization were taken not only by the British colonial establishment and Whitehall but also by the nationalist politicians of Nigeria. Decolonization was the product of two grand strategies, the result of a “push-pull” relationship and the dialectics of actions and reactions of two sets of political actors. This dualism of initiatives produced different consequences for the British and the nationalist politicians. The British successfully established conditions for neocolonialism before they withdrew from Nigeria. British strategy succeeded in ensuring that through entrenching the preponderant influence of grateful northern leaders, their economic and even political influence was adequately safeguarded. With the attainment of independence in 1960, the nationalist politicians achieved one of their long-term objectives: the termination of foreign rule. In large measure they also ensured that power was transferred to the educated rather than the traditional elites. But in practice the educated elites did not and could not hold the monopoly of power in the post-colonial state.

In the north the traditional elites still wielded much political influence even under the new dispensation. Because of colonial government policy on education in the north, the emergent educated elite there were closely connected with the rulers of the emirate and Native Authority systems. Therefore the inheritors of power there were educated elites with a very strong traditional base. This proved of far-reaching consequence for the politics of the post-colonial state: it was an emirate connection more than anything else that guaranteed political success in most parts of the north.

Even in the south the educated elites began to go out of their way to take honorary chieftaincy titles as a means to political legitimation. Sklar observed that in 1958 “Chief Enahoro and Chief C. D. Akran were the only ‘traditional’ rulers in the Western Region Executive Council although several other members of the Council held titles and were addressed as ‘Chief.’”⁵² Moreover, the constitutional provisions for the Houses of Chiefs in the north (1946), the west (1951), and the east (1960) meant that in the new scheme of things the traditional elites would continue to have important inputs into the political process. The years of military rule (1966–1979) did not reduce their influence,

52. Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*, p. 126.

although the Presidential Constitution of the Second Republic (1979–1983) failed to provide specific functions for them. Nevertheless, it is clear that the political class of the educated elite, whether in civilian administration or in military rule, have come to recognize the continuing relevance of the traditional elites in the governance of Nigeria.

Although all Nigerians welcomed independence enthusiastically, many of the minority ethnic groups did not feel that they had achieved internal self-determination; in consequence, their own battles for self-determination in the creation of more states were just beginning. For these groups the objectives of the nationalist movement were only partially fulfilled in 1960.

On the whole, however, independence brought the opportunity for the creation of a modern nation-state. In 1960 Nigerians graduated from the politics of protest to those of the exercise of power. The era of nation building, modernization, socio-economic development and integration for the common good had dawned. But, as Wallerstein observed:

The government of a new nation, immediately after independence is a very unstable thing . . . the existence of an external enemy—the major motivation for unity in the nationalist movement—has largely disappeared. The political mobilization, the subordination of private and sectional claims to the needs of the whole, is inevitably diminished. . . . Moreover there is a sense of disappointment at unfulfilled expectation.⁵³

Nationalism in Nigeria produced neither a national hero accepted as such throughout the country nor a national party that could have been turned into potent integrative institutions for social mobilization. Nationalist politics was devoid of any ideological base or commitment. The tragedy of Nigeria's political experience was that, unlike India, it failed to produce a statesman in office. Satisfied with hegemonic influence in the north, the Sardauna simply refused to aspire to national leadership; and Dr. Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo, who had developed national aspirations, did not ever attain power at the center. The strategies and dialectics of the transfer of power partly account for these unfortunate consequences. The political class was preoccupied with the structural and administrative mechanisms with which to consolidate their regional bases and capture power at the center. This determination to capture federal power in Lagos brought forth intense competition and a domination syndrome. Controversies over the 1962 and 1963 censuses and the disputed 1964 federal elections all showed that the north would try to preserve its dominant

53. Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence* (New York, 1961), p. 86.

position by whatever means necessary.⁵⁴ They also demonstrated how the NCNC was anxious to be one of two ruling parties in the unstable political equilibrium dominated by three.

In the process, Nigerians failed to evolve a structure of power that could engender political stability. The Westminster model was ineffective. It assumed that the state would be a melting pot of citizens acting as individuals, equal before the law, voting rationally in free and fair elections. The nationalists themselves would appear to have been deluded into accepting such a framework, on the basis of a homogeneous educated elite gently leading the traditional elite and the masses to real freedom. In reality, the pre-colonial polities as modified by colonialism persisted as units of power, and ethnicity grew as yet another mechanism for protecting local and regional interests. The post-colonial state became a forum for trading power to protect largely regional and local interests, often to the neglect of the overall national interests.

Each of the three dominant political leaders mapped out a strategy for evolving a structure of control at the center in the new state. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe aimed at an NCNC powerful in the eastern and western regions, allying with the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) to form a centralized and quasi-radical state. On the other hand Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Action Group wanted to use its entrenched position in the west and minority areas in the east and mid-west, in alliance with the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) and other minority groups in Sokoto and Borno in the north, to form a sort of "socialist" state. But the built-in power of the north captured by the NPC was adequate to frustrate such strategies.

The NPC strategy of control required an ally from the south to produce a federal government with a working majority. At first the NCNC was willing to oblige. It soon turned out that the NPC preferred not an ally wishing to share power but a client—individuals and minorities grateful for NPC favors rather than representatives of a major ethnic group. When the NPC-NCNC government had successfully destabilized the Action Group, the alliance fell apart and the subsequent NPC-NNDP accommodation proved an inadequate successor. The result was virtual chaos. There was not enough consensus in the country to conduct a census or a free and fair election whose results would confer legitimacy and wide acceptability on the government. The stage was set for a drift to military intervention and civil war.

54. There is an in-depth treatment of this theme in B. J. Dudley's two works: *Instability and Political Order: Politics and Crisis in Nigeria* (Ibadan, 1973), esp. chap. 4, and *Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria* (Totowa, N.J., 1968).

In the intense competition for power, the dominant issues were not policies and programs but who would control the allocation of scarce federal resources and patronage. Every aspect of national life became dominated by considerations of power politics. Critical issues of state such as national integration and the problems of economic underdevelopment were forced into peripheral and inconsequential categories in the national life. Development planning in the First Republic highlighted not any coherently worked-out strategy but regional bias to the neglect of national development and integration. For example, although experts had shown that enough power could be generated by a modest investment in natural gas available in the south, the NPC-dominated federal government preferred to invest a larger sum in constructing the Kainji Dam instead. Similarly, the government showed no enthusiasm for a scheme to exploit iron ore located in the north to develop steel industries located in the south.⁵⁵ This inability of the political class to tackle the problems of underdevelopment effectively produced frustrations and mounting social and economic problems. Without evolving an acceptable structure of control, the political class was unable to utilize oil revenues to relieve the problems of underdevelopment; rather, oil revenues intensified competition, contributed to the causes of the civil war, and after the war further highlighted the weaknesses of the political system.

The crisis that led to the attempted secession of the east and the resultant civil war provided the opportunity for a major political engineering that altered the existing federal structure. General Yakubu Gowon created twelve states out of the existing four regions and tried to build a majority out of the minority ethnic groups as a new force in Nigerian politics. His attempt to stay on indefinitely in power failed, and the regime that ousted him speedily returned the country to civil rule.

The Presidential Constitution of 1979 did not resolve the issue of a stable political structure of control. Although there were now nineteen states, the political groupings that emerged and their strategies to achieve and retain power were almost identical with those of the First Republic because they revolved largely round the same issues of local and regional interests. Ethnic groups still expressed their solidarity; the interests of the ruler took precedence over those of the governed; the tendency toward authoritarianism still posed a threat to democratic principles and constitutionalism; and, in spite of constitutional provisions and the entrenchment of fundamental human rights, elections were manipulated and political victimization was the order of the

55. First National Development Plan, 1962–1968 (Lagos, 1962); on Kainji Dam and the development of steel plant, see Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics*, pp. 557–58; Dudley, *Instability and Political Order*, pp. 69–70; Edwin Dean, *Plan Implementation in Nigeria* (Ibadan, 1972), pp. 247ff.

day. The issues of succession and legitimation of government such as can produce good leadership able to mobilize the people effectively for development have not been resolved. These problems are compounded by the fact that devolution of power to Nigerians did not include economic power, which remains with those controlling the export-import trade. The struggle for economic power based on local agricultural and industrial production and the control of the means of production has been handicapped by the failure to evolve a structure of control able to produce a stable political order. Hence political problems and the technical issues of the acquisition and retention of political power, rather than economic or social development, have continued to dominate Nigeria's national life.

11. *Neocolonialism and Dependence in Senegal, 1960–1980*

BOUBACAR BARRY

Some comrades have been alarmed at hearing me speak of autonomy. I ask them to consider this problem calmly, without regard for the fact that autonomy does not mean independence. We socialists of Black Africa are for a rapidly progressive autonomy within the framework of the French Republic at first, and then within that of the French Union when the time comes.

—Léopold Sédar Senghor, address before the National Congress of the SFIO, 20 March 1947

I say to the Government that we still remain men of good will; we accept not only the French Union but also the Republic. Events in Indochina prove to us that we are France's last chance. It is necessary, however, that you have the will to abolish the Colonial Pact, at least at the economic level. But the Government's most recent measures appear to reinforce this Pact.

—L. S. Senghor, National Assembly session of 29 October 1953, in Senghor, *Liberté*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1971), pp. 116.

There are many of us Africans whose dual attachment to France and to Black Africa cannot fairly be placed in doubt. We hope that the Government of the French Republic will sign association agreements with the Republic of Guinea. This would be the first building block of that association of free states, that French-style commonwealth, that we are asking for with all our hearts. Only the conclusion of peace in Algeria and the erection of this association will restore to France her true visage, her true grandeur, in a word: her mission, which is to lead dependent peoples to liberty in friendship. Then, but only then, the motto of the French Republic will regain its meaning: Liberty—Equality—Fraternity.

—“Les Cahiers de la République, October 1958,” in Senghor, *Liberté*, vol. 2, *Nation et voie africaine du socialisme* (Paris, 1971), p. 231.

Senegal is the oldest French colony south of the Sahara; it is also the first country to have had political parties and, moreover, the first to be endowed with representative institutions. At the same time it is the country with the longest tradition of cooperation with the colonial power, but also the one that generated the most radical currents of resistance and opposition to the colonial order in all domains. The phenomenon of the transfer of power in the 1960s, therefore, cannot be dissociated from this old political tradition in Senegal, the pilot colony and the first to be developed economically. But decolonization is also linked to French domestic politics and, above all, to the overall politics of the territories grouped from the first in the Federation of French West Africa—*Afrique Occidentale Française* (AOF).

On the political level, after the reign of white minorities from 1848 to 1902, of mulattoes from 1902 to 1914, and of blacks in the four communes between 1914 and 1951, it is indisputably Léopold Sédar Senghor, the poet of the black condition (*négritude*) who has marked most deeply the present face of Senegal. From the creation in 1948 of the Senegalese Democratic Bloc—*Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais* (BDS)—and the victory of his party in 1951, Léopold Sédar Senghor increasingly dominated Senegalese political life. He effected the transfer of power in 1960, and thereby ruled Senegal until his retirement from the presidency in 1980. The bard of the black condition, who with Césaire breathed life during the 1930s into the movement to contest on the intellectual plane the policy of assimilation, belonged to the rural bourgeoisie sector of the great majority in Senegal subject to the native-affairs code (*indigénat*).

Léopold Sédar Senghor served his political apprenticeship in the French section of the Workers' International—*Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière* (SFIO). It was dominated by Lamine Gueye, a citizen of the four communes and a partisan of the assimilation policy. After his break in 1948, Léopold Sédar Senghor gradually formulated the concept of the black condition's political aspect as the basis of African socialism, first in the BDS, then the *Union Progressiste Sénégalaise* (UPS), and finally within the Socialist party (PS). In all cases, the circumstances of the 1960 transfer of power constituted an important cleavage between the political demands within the French colonial empire and the new management responsibilities incumbent upon the African leaders after independence.

Before 1960 Senghor was a partisan of the French Republic, one and indivisible: that is, of the evolution of the overseas territories toward political autonomy, according to their respective distinctive characteristics and traditions. This attachment to the Franco-African community permits one to understand Senegal's policy of continuity with the colonial system despite the

presence of a substantial intellectual and political opposite current favoring a total rupture with the French imperial system.

The circumstances of the transfer of power are thus important in understanding independent Senegal's evolution, together with the role of the founding fathers, whose role there is a tendency to overvalue to the neglect of the economic, political, and social transformations in contemporary Africa. Indeed, beyond the typology of personal power constructed by Jackson and Rosenberg, who distinguish among the princely, the autocratic, the prophetic, and the tyrannical, and beyond the variability among African socialisms, there is a concrete reality whose evolution must be apprehended in its full political, economic, and social dimensions. The evolution of the newly independent states over the past quarter-century must be studied from a global historical perspective, in order to understand not only the numerous and complex transformations undergone by our societies but also the importance of the conditions in which power was transferred in the 1960s.

The granting of independence by France to her former colonies opened the way for neocolonialism, which finds in Senegal its favorite terrain.

PRELUDE TO INDEPENDENCE

In contrast with Guinea in 1958, Senegal's independence in August 1960, as in the great majority of territories in the federations of French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa, did not constitute a violent rupture with France. Senegal, this old colony of the French Union, acceded gradually to international sovereignty by way of Gaston Defferre's *loi cadre* which, in 1957, granted the colonies administrative autonomy, and within the framework of the Franco-African Community after the referendum organized by General de Gaulle in 1958. This gradual transition to international sovereignty thus reflects the genuine ability of French colonial imperialism, faced with the magnitude of the nationalist movements among the colonized peoples seeking independence in the 1950s, to jettison some ballast in order to preserve the essentials.

Old Senegal, the country of political assimilation according to Abdoulaye Ly's formula, participated actively within the French Union framework in the struggle for a chimerical equality with the Frenchmen of the metropole. Senegalese political life then was dominated by Lamine Gueye, leader of the urban centers in the long tradition of political participation by the four communes of Saint Louis, Dakar, Gorée and Rufisque. Totally aligned with the assimilation ideology rejecting any proposal for political decolonization, Lamine Gueye as head of the SFIO directed political life from 1946 to 1951. He

supported a broadly liberal colonial doctrine: the democratization, that is, of the colonial regime, the recognition and respect of democratic principles and individual liberties through effective application of the provisions guaranteeing them within the French Union.¹ Very soon, Lamine Gueye recruited the prestigious poet of the black condition, Léopold Sédar Senghor, who then represented the new colonial elite, in order to extend the SFIO's base to the new urban and rural centers recently promoted to political life. Lamine Gueye thus organized a built-in clientele on the pattern of Bakary Traoré among the notables, who played the role of senior electors. The old cities, however, through the intermediary of their bourgeoisie, continued to be the socialist party's highly centralized sector, to the advantage of Lamine Gueye and his friends. Meanwhile Lamine Gueye, as head of this Senegalese bellwether territory, was naturally the leader of all French Africa, fighting for freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and association, and for gaining the French citizenship that constituted the finest claim to glory for this Senegalese lawyer.²

The French Union, however, confined the black-African colonies still more within the framework of the colonial pact, and equality, so eagerly anticipated, proved a chimera. Through trade-union activity, and among the new colonial elite dissatisfied with the existing political cadres, more radical ideas then developed that culminated in the creation of the African Democratic Assembly—*Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA)—in 1946 at Bamako. Having participated in preparing the manifesto for the calling of a political congress to protest against the wave of colonialist reaction then sweeping over France, Lamine Gueye and Senghor deliberately absented themselves from the RDA's founding congress at Bamako. The two Senegalese leaders' absence was to weigh heavily on the fate of African political evolution, even though the RDA's position from the outset was relatively conservative. At that time the RDA demanded, within the framework of the French Union, a union freely agreed to by the African populations and the people of France, based on equal rights and duties and recognition of peoples' right to self-determination. But the RDA, like Lamine Gueye and Senghor's SFIO, did not mention independence as an objective to be achieved at once. In his address before the SFIO national congress on 20 March 1947, Senghor could not have been more explicit when he declared: "Some comrades have been alarmed at hearing me speak of autonomy. I ask them to consider this problem calmly, without regard to the fact that autonomy does not mean independence. We African socialists are for a rapidly progressive autonomy within the framework of the

1. Bakary Traoré, Mamadou Lô, and Jean Louis Alibert, *Forces politiques en Afrique noire*, (Paris, 1966), p. 24.

2. Traoré, *ibid.*, p. 31.

French Republic at first, and then within that of the French Union when the time comes."

Despite its dynamism, the Union Démocratique Sénégalaise (UDS), the RDA's Senegalese section, remained in the minority in Senegal, faced with the strong personalities of the socialist party's leaders. The RDA tended to recruit particularly teachers, lower-rank civil servants, employees in the liberal professions, as well as members of Confédération Générale des Travailleurs (CGT) unions: the Thiès Autonomous Federation of Railwaymen and the teachers federation, whose demands were shifting increasingly to the political field. The political split between conservatives and progressives thenceforth marked Senegal's new countenance. At the same time that the nationalist movement was developing, the acceleration of social change following the failure of the first juridical reforms created within the SFIO a situation of rupture between the elite composed of the notables in the older cities and the notables of the new urban and rural centers. The cleavage in legal status between French citizens and natives gave way to opposition between the conservative caste of the four communes and the rural elites who were virtually indistinguishable from the new intellectual elite.³

The monopoly exercised by Lamine Gueye over his party's choice of candidates, together with condemnation of the 1947 railwaymen's strike, accelerated the disaffection of the new elites with the SFIO. Senghor resigned in protest against Lamine Gueye's personal power and against the fact that the SFIO defended above all its parliamentary interests in the metropole to the detriment of the overseas territories' interests. The BDS of Senghor and Mamadou Dia thus returned to the idea, dear to the poet of the black condition, of a rapidly progressive autonomy, while denouncing SFIO control of the Dakar and Saint Louis communes and the collusion between Lamine Gueye and the colonial interests. The BDS demanded an increase in the price paid to the peasants for peanuts and methodically established itself in the large cities and then in the rural centers. By recruiting the notables and the rural cadres the BDS thus bypassed the activity and influence of the old elites, those of the four communes, to form its clienteles in Senegal's hinterland, at the level of ethnic and regional groups. Senghor's success was ensured in the first place by the notables, especially the chiefs of the Murid and Tijani religious brotherhoods, who sought a rise in the peanut price, before being ensured by the peasant masses when universal suffrage propelled them to the front of the political stage. The BDS victory in the 1951 elections confirmed this success and continued to broaden the party's bases

3. Traoré, *ibid.*, pp. 36–39. Traoré places special emphasis on this aspect of the conflict which was, schematically, reduced to conflict between city dwellers and country folk.

without, however, eliminating the polarization and crystallization between conservatives and progressives.⁴

At the federal level Senghor endeavored to counterweigh the influence of the RDA, disaffiliated since 1950 from the Communist party, by activating the African parliamentary group, Overseas Independents—Indépendants d'Outre-Mer (IOM). It was then that he invented the formula of federalism, to exorcize the demon represented by the wave of nationalist independence movements inundating the entire edifice of the colonial empires.

At the moment when, on the international scene, the Bandung Conference placed the capstone on these movements for national liberation of colonized peoples, the publication of 1955 of Shaikh Anta Diop's *Black Nations and Culture* and Abdoulaye Ly's *African Masses and the Present Human Condition* constituted on the intellectual level a remarkable tool for rejection of the colonial situation and the molding of African nationalism's ideology. Similarly, the trade-union movement developed, apart from the political parties absorbed in their rivalries, thereby expressing nationalism's political demands, and culminating in 1957 in the creation of the General Union of Black African Workers—Union Générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noire (UGTAN). Because of this political effervescence and the radicalization of the debate over independence, the BDS leadership embarked in 1956 on a vast unification campaign designed to maintain itself at the helm and stem the RDA tidal wave sweeping over all the African territories.⁵

At that time the BDS gained a second breath with the adhesion of the new elites composed of university graduates recently returned from France, such as Abdoulaye Ly, Ahmadou Mathar M'Bow, Assane Seck, Abdoul Aziz Wane, and so forth. They collaborated in defining an inventive ideology for the anti-colonial struggle in black Africa by which top priority was ascribed to the peasant masses within the framework of a broad autonomy in the overseas territories. The municipal elections of 18 November and territorial elections of 31 March 1957 confirmed the success of the BDS, which then took the name Senegalese People's Bloc (BPS) to signify its aspiration to unify all the Senegalese political parties. This unification, however, coincided both with the debate over the provisions of the Gaston Defferre *loi cadre* and with the triumph of the RDA in most of French West Africa, which deprived the Senegalese of the leadership of African policy. Senghor rose up forcefully against the Gaston Defferre law, which was inspired by Houphouët Boigny. According to Senghor, the objective of this law was to balkanize Africa. He vehemently defended the preservation of the federa-

4. Traoré, *ibid.*, pp. 47–56.

5. Mamadou Lô, *ibid.*, p. 108.

tion as a federal union of free peoples equal with the French Republic. The election of Houphouët Boigny as president of the AOF High Council envenomed the polemic with Senghor over the *loi cadre*'s provisions. Coordinating conferences proliferated at the federal level among all the African parties to discuss the relations among the various territories that were to be granted total internal autonomy, and those between France and her former overseas territories generally. Previously, public reconciliation between Senghor and Lamine Gueye had made possible the founding of the UPS, which was thus to become the Senegalese branch of the African Reorganization Party—Parti du Regroupement Africain (PRA)—in opposition to the great RDA structure.⁶

Events then occurred precipitously as France, engrossed in the Algerian war, experienced an unprecedented crisis in the institutional field. The crisis led General de Gaulle to propose a referendum on the establishment of a Franco-African Community, in part to resolve the colonial problem. The campaign for the referendum revived the political debate in black Africa among partisans of immediate independence, whether for a federal African nation or for a multinational federation with France. The referendum, on the other hand, offered no alternatives except for the choice between secession—that is, total independence—and membership of the Franco-African Community proposed by France. Under the influence of its intellectual left, the UPS participated in the founding conference of the ephemeral PRA at Cotonou in July 1958, which reaffirmed rejection of balkanizing the AOF and endorsed the slogan of immediate independence. The independence slogan was already being supported in France by the new African Independence Party—Parti Africain de l'Indépendance (PAI)—and in Dakar by the General Union of Black African Students and the Mouvement de Libération Nationale (MLN), recently created in this stormy atmosphere of the campaign over the referendum.⁷

Although they attended the Cotonou congress, Léopold Sédar Senghor and Mamadou Dia were absent from the meeting at Dakar where General de Gaulle, passing through, was greeted with a gigantic demonstration organized by the entire intellectual left to urge a vote of no—that is, a vote in favor of immediate independence. Senghor and Dia reversed themselves to preach a yes vote, with the active support of the principal religious chiefs of the Murid and Tijani brotherhoods in Touba, Tiwawane, and Kaolack. It was pressure by France, which threatened to impose the world price on Senegal's peanut monoculture, that led Senghor and Dia to campaign for yes.

6. Traoré, *ibid.*, pp. 66–74.

7. Abdoulaye Ly, *L'émergence du néocolonialisme au Sénégal* (Dakar, 1982), pp. 27–35.

They thereby avoided being placed in a minority position vis-à-vis the electoral body, entirely manipulated by the chiefs of the religious brotherhoods.⁸ Later, however, Senghor justified his yes by the desire to reconstitute the two federations after their balkanization under the *loi cadre* and elevate them as federal states, members of the community. "Black Africa's 'yes' is above all a 'yes' for Black African unity. . . . But unity in the eyes of the PRA and several branches of the RDA is simply a means of achieving Black Africa's independence. . . . For the peoples of Black Africa do not intend to seize this independence by violence: they do not desire it against France, but through France, in association with France."⁹

The massive yes vote produced a schism within the UPS and the founding of the Senegalese branch of the PRA by those who supported a vote of no, such as Abdoulaye Ly, Assane Seck, and Mathar M'Bow. Aside from Guinea, whose negative vote prepared the way for its rupture with the former metropole, Senegal and all the other territories of the AOF and French Equatorial Africa—Afrique Equatoriale Française (AEF)—entered into the French Community system proposed by the referendum. For the UPS, African unity was then considered a precondition of independence. Therefore, on Senegal's initiative the conference of 22 and 30 December at Bamako assembled the federalists since, as Senghor declared, France's interest resided in achieving the preexisting federation within the French Community.¹⁰ Opposing the attitude of the Ivory Coast, which favored shattering the federal structures, Senegal and the Sudan ultimately formed the Mali Federation. The examples of Guinea and Ghana, and the vigor of the nationalist movement, obliged the Mali Federation to negotiate immediately the transfer of authority so as to ensure a smooth transition from colonialism to neocolonialism. France gave up direct administration, now irremediably outmoded, in order to avoid a direct accession to full and unconditional independence, after eliciting firm assurances guaranteeing that the transfer and association agreements would be signed simultaneously.¹¹

The proclamation of Mali on 4 April 1960 was followed immediately by a crisis within the federation that exposed the fragility of the marriage of convenience between the Sudanese Union, a branch of the RDA, and the Senegalese Progressive Union. Although the complementariness of the Senegalese and the Sudanese economies is obvious, the political divergence

8. "Independence is peanuts bought at the world price, which is 15 francs a kilogram," according to Senghor in his electoral campaign at Louga; quoted by Ly, *ibid.*, p. 42.

9. L. S. Senghor, *Liberté*, vol. 2: *Nation et voie africaine de socialisme* (Paris, 1974), pp. 225–26.

10. Ly, *L'émergence*, p. 68.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

between the two political entities soon broke out into the open. Urban and industrial Senegal, closely dependent on the French economy, contrasted with the Sudan, an agricultural country par excellence without capitalist encroachment. Furthermore, Senegal's reformism and conciliation of imperialism in the political tradition of the Senegalese petite bourgeoisie of the four communes contrasted with the Sudan, where a single mass party organized in the anti-colonial struggle tradition of the RDA controlled a disciplined state seeking national independence.¹² The result was the rupture of 19–20 August 1960 that ensured Senegal's independence under the presidency of Léopold Sédar Senghor. But meanwhile the Mali Federation played the role of lifesaver for the UPS, already confronted with a strong domestic political opposition desiring immediate independence, and later served as a base of operations for the organization and strengthening of its power system. The rupture with Mali ushered in the reign of the UPS and the reinforcement of presidential authority within a trade economy dominated by the old peanut monoculture.

PEANUTS, PRESIDENTIAL POWER, AND COLONIAL CONTINUITY, 1960–1970

The pilot colony of the French Empire in West Africa, Senegal found itself alone after the failure of all the forms of federalism so strongly defended by the poet of the black condition, Léopold Sédar Senghor. For this reason Senegal, whose development took place early thanks to the peanut monoculture and whose capital, Dakar, was endowed with a substantial industrial complex, felt itself cramped inside its small territory after the loss of the West African market.

Notwithstanding its rich colonial heritage, independent Senegal was obliged to embark on a transformation of its economy and to ensure the stability of its political regime in the face of Senegalese nationalists seeking a sharp break with the metropole. Senghor chose to strengthen the power of the presidency by asserting the preponderance of the UPS, which became tantamount to a single party. In the economic field, in spite of the choice in principle of the African path to socialism, he ensured the continuation of the peanut monoculture and reinforced the links between Senegal and France.

These three decisions engendered the crisis that erupted during 1967–1968 in the cities under the leadership of the unions and the students. To this urban crisis was added one in the peanut economy, which had suffered a severe blow through Senegal's alignment with the world market. Senegal was

12. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

being opened up to international capital, thus beginning the first break with the classical colonial system of trade economy. But the state had already become the source of all power in the economic, political, and social domains. The omnipotent state, in the service of presidential monocracy according to Pathé Diagne's model, was now the country's chief entrepreneur.

Creation of the Mali Federation had served as a lifesaver for the UPS in standing up to nationalists favoring immediate independence. The breakup of the federation served as the pretext for the reinforcement of the president's powers in the name of Senegalese protonationalism, according to the logic of the nation-states resulting from the balkanization of the great AOF and AEF aggregations.

Thus in December 1962 independent Senegal experienced its first institutional crisis, marked by the failure of power sharing within the framework of the parliamentary regime. The break between Mamadou Dia, chairman of the Council of Government, and Senghor was above all the result of a political conflict. Dia's fall put an end to the first phase of a radical development strategy in the rural areas designed to enhance the role of the cooperatives in the distribution of goods, so as to end exploitation of the Senegalese peasant by the trade economy. The break, usually represented as a simple palace revolution pitting two personalities one against the other, opened the way to the presidential regime and the domination of the *de facto* single party that characterized the Senegalese political system until 1976. Thus in March 1963 Senghor secured the adoption by referendum of the presidential regime and thereby became the sole captain aboard, in the name of the national unity required for building the new state. But first he was obliged to deal with a strong domestic opposition hostile to the policy of colonial continuity that was strengthening the French presence in all fields. The regime therefore eliminated the opposition forces by resorting to a state of emergency and the laws relating to the requisition of government officials on strike. The principal opposition parties, the PRA and the PAI, were suppressed or forced underground following the legislative and presidential elections in December 1963. This repression, which produced dozens of fatalities and many wounded, facilitated the inauguration of the neocolonial regime and the consolidation of presidential power erected around a man who fancied himself heaven sent.¹³ This presidential power, served increasingly by a vast clientele of technocrats that had become the embryo of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the service of an omnipresent and omnipotent state, progressively gained strength, leaning on the dominant UPS.

Whatever the distinctive features of Senegal, however, the presidential

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 92–93, 100.

regime thus installed did not differ fundamentally from that in other black-African states dominated by a single party. In the economic field, Senghor, as chief of both party and state, opted for preserving the trade economy based on peanuts, notwithstanding declarations on development or the African path to socialism. In the political field, ties with France were reinforced by means of cooperation agreements ensuring the essential continuity of the colonial system in the domains of defense, currency, and higher education.

As a matter of fact, the UPS government did no more than take control of the public and quasi-public institutions of the colonial state. In the economic field the state established its monopoly of the primary agricultural sector in the name of common-man Senegalese socialism, while abandoning the industrial sector to French capital. Consequently, Senegal opted for developing peanut monoculture, which perpetuated the overall structures of trade economy. In the first half of the nineteenth century peanuts had indeed saved the old colony, then prey to a profound crisis after the decline of the slave and rubber trades. The priority assigned to peanuts at the time of independence, by contrast, coincided with a period when the nuts were becoming less profitable because of price fluctuations on the world market.

Senegal in fact chose to increase production substantially, and it reached the record figure of more than a million tons in 1965, thanks to a sustained policy of agricultural modernization. The objective was to raise the yield per hectare by 50 percent, so as to permit the state to finance the country's industrial development and build the infrastructure in all fields. Thus, within the framework of socialist policy the government established cooperatives and moved toward the nationalization of trade with the creation of the Office de Commercialisation Agricole (OCA).¹⁴ In view of the importance of peanuts, which alone represented 80 percent of the country's exports in 1966, 87 percent of the jobs in a population with a rural majority, and 20 percent of the value of Senegalese industrial output, the government decided to exercise total control over this vital sector of the economy. African socialist policy aimed to free the peasantry from the straitjacket of colonial trade economy and mobilize it for a major development effort. In order to put an end to the Senegalese peasant's chronic indebtedness, the state decided to create the National Office for Cooperation and Development Assistance—Office National de Coopération et d'Assistance pour le Développement (ONCAD). In 1967 ONCAD's responsibility was extended to the transport and marketing of the cooperatives' harvests in Senegal's hinterland, as well as to the import, storage, and distribution of rice and millet.¹⁵

14. Samir Amin, *L'Afrique de l'ouest bloquée* (Paris, 1976), pp. 34–35.

15. N. Casswell, "Autopsie de l'ONCAD: la politique arachidière du Sénégal, 1966–1980," *Politique africaine* 14 (1984): p. 42.

ONCAD very quickly became a producing agency, whereas the cooperatives remained confined to a strictly secondary role as points where the harvests were gathered and distributed. The priority accorded to marketing reflected above all a political orientation toward quantitative production goals, to the detriment of enhancing life in the countryside. It stemmed, furthermore, from the period of lean years occasioned by abolition of the preferential prices Senegal had previously enjoyed on the French market. In fact, the fall of the exchange rate—by 20 percent between 1957 and 1966—became markedly more serious after peanuts were made subject to the world market.¹⁶ Designed to mobilize rural savings for application to the urban and industrial sector, ONCAD failed in its mission, and its failure was closely linked to the role the office played as an instrument of political control in the hands of the state.

At an unfavorable global juncture, the peasants continued systematically to subsidize the price of rice and urban wages through the Price Stabilization Fund. In effect, the government freed the rural world from the exploitation of the old colonial companies only to subject it to that of the state. Furthermore, the state did not succeed in establishing complete control over the peanut sector, because substantial quantities flowed through parallel commercial channels and because of the excessive profits reaped by the processing enterprises, with respect to which the government had found itself in a weak position in the negotiations preceding the institution of the marketing apparatus. Similarly, state control did not succeed in eliminating either private merchants or private lenders but instead aggravated the problem of rural indebtedness by adding to it debts contracted from the Senegal National Development Bank—*Banque Nationale de Développement du Sénégal* (BNDS)—to defray the costs of the so-called modernization policy.¹⁷

In the countryside, on the other hand, nationalization of marketing channels increased the weight of the large Murid and Tijani brotherhoods, whose chiefs took into their own hands the implements placed at the cooperatives' disposition to modernize their agriculture.¹⁸ We thus observe the emergence of a belated and partial capitalism of high-volume producers consisting for the most part of marabouts enjoying special privileges at each phase of the commercial cycle. State control, however, introduced important changes by the closure of colonial commercial enterprises and their retreat to Dakar, where they concentrated on import-export trade, while the Syrians and Lebanese also abandoned retail trade for wholesale and semi-wholesale commerce.¹⁹

Actually, the nationalization of agriculture as an aspect of socialist organiza-

16. Amin, *L'Afrique*, p. 30.

17. Casswell, "Autopsie," pp. 43–44, 57.

18. Amin, *L'Afrique*, pp. 33–34.

19. Casswell, "Autopsie," p. 57.

tion went forward with the abandonment of the industrial sector to private French capital. The state did indeed take into its own hands the postal service, the railway, and a few agri-business holdings by the agency of state companies, the management of which, with few exceptions, proved disastrous. On the other hand, all the vital industrial sectors remained dominated by private French capital, heirs to the old commercial houses of the colonial era. Thus, the *Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale* (CFAO), the *Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain* (SCOA), Maurel, and Prom relinquished to the state those industrial operations of dubious profitability. These commercial concerns not only preserved their monopoly of supply to the Senegalese market but also participated in the production and industrial processing of Senegalese raw materials, as a function of demands on the French market. The exclusive monopoly of French capital thus adapted to the small size of the Senegalese market while creating new industrial units responding to the national objective of import substitution (petroleum refineries, printing, fertilizer factory, automobile assembly plant, and so forth). French capital also endeavored to enhance the value of exports by industrial processing on the spot (processing of attapulgit, extraction of phosphate fertilizer, increasing the grinding capacity of edible oil factories). This policy aimed above all to meet the requirements of the French market and largely dominated the industrial sector in which private enterprise of a truly national nature had as yet hardly risen above the artisan level.²⁰

The state thus perpetuated the basic mechanisms of production in a colonial situation, aside from some procedural reforms. Establishment of the National Development Bank and the Senegalese Banking Union changed nothing in the banking system, which still served French industrial and commercial groups exclusively. Private French capital furthermore benefited from a very liberal and indiscriminate policy of tax exemption, together with the unlimited right to repatriate profits. France participated directly in the process through its Central Bank for Economic Cooperation and Aid and Cooperation Fund, in order to maintain the flow of external exchanges between the metropole and Senegal. This assistance was also designed to consolidate the bases of the Senegalese state, which had to meet social problems and construct an infrastructure in all domains to maintain and improve the colonial heritage and respond to the needs of an exploding population.²¹

In any case, the option chosen by Senegal after independence to continue along the path of peanut specialization had grave consequences. In the first place, it limited industrialization, since the principal industries—edible-oil

20. G. Rocheteau, *Pouvoir financier et indépendance économique: le cas du Sénégal* (1982), pp. 363–64.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 362.

factories represented 35 percent—were situated downstream from a stagnating agriculture subject to climatic vagaries and fluctuation of the world market.²² The option is at the origin of the decline of the Senegalese economy and the profound crisis that shook the cities as well as the countryside at the end of this first decade of independence.

In the countryside the policy of modernizing peanut cultivation failed, in large part because of the transfer to the urban and industrial sector of the bulk of the rural world's income. The peasant who received a sum below the world price for the sale of his product lacked the means to defray the increasingly high costs of obtaining fertilizer, insecticides, agricultural implements, and selected seeds. His debts to the middleman firms rose substantially. The agrarian crisis was aggravated by a decrease in world prices, and especially by a series of droughts that descended upon the Sahel and produced a fall in production year after year. All this, together with embezzlement in the marketing process, led to a peasant revolt. Peasant unrest expressed itself in a partial abandonment of peanut planting in favor of subsistence crops and in the virtually universal refusal to repay debts or to contract new ones. It was furthermore reflected in the growing resort to parallel and contraband channels of commerce on a large scale to the Gambia and in disaffection with public and technical services.²³ In 1970 the rural areas were on the verge of an uprising as a result of vexations perpetrated by the administrators on peasants virtually unable to pay their debts after a terrible drought had set off its cycle of poor harvests. To the outburst of anger in the rural world was added a revolt in the urban centers, where the unions and the students led the struggle against the economic and political decisions of a state dominated by a *de facto* single party within the presidential monarchy framework.

The crisis in the cities above all reflected the discontent of the intellectual Left, denied genuine independence by reason of the French presence in all the mechanisms of government under the umbrella of technical assistance. This nationalism was exacerbated by the weight of French capital in the economy and in the fields of industrial production and of wholesale and semi-wholesale trade, which prevented the emergence of a national bourgeoisie. In addition, economic recession greatly reduced the purchasing power of the low urban wages and redoubled the unions' demands in spite of laws denying the right to strike. The Senghor government used both carrot and stick to quell all its opponents. Dia's imprisonment and police repression exerted on the opposition parties after the 1963 elections inaugurated a long period of confrontation between state authority and the political, union, and student oppositions that played an increasingly prominent role in public opinion. In 1965

22. Amin, *L'Afrique*, pp. 38–39.

23. Casswell, "Autopsie," pp. 47–48.

Senghor nevertheless held numerous consultations aimed at the absorption of the Senegalese branch of the PRA, offering three ministerial portfolios to the principal leaders of that party, which was then integrated with the UPS, which remained in effect the sole party until 1976.

This tour de force nevertheless failed to disarm the clandestine opposition of PAI elements in exile, of various schools of thought. Opposition to the neocolonialist policy was expressed for the most part in union headquarters and within the student movement, which constituted the only sorts of organization, aside from the governing party, that the law tolerated in practice or could not totally forbid. The junction of the union and student movements in 1968 violently shook Dakar and momentarily paralyzed the whole country. The movement continued during 1969–1970 despite police repression, firings, and the partial closure of the university.²⁴

The dual crisis in the countryside and the cities almost swept away the Senghor regime, which owed its salvation to the discreet protection of the French Army and intervention for the second time by the religious chiefs, who broadcast an appeal for calm. In essence, the wheels of politics dominated by clientele relationships turned perfectly well, with the logistical support of a state that had become more and more powerful. In the country nationalization of the peanut trade had strengthened the position of the marabouts as spiritual intermediaries, but also as mediators between their followers and the state. They consequently served as a safety valve for peasant discontent by reason of their substantial influence over the cooperatives in their respective regions.²⁵ In the cities the state's discretionary power reduced all opposition by simple administrative measures to punish recalcitrants and reward servants of the regime. Notwithstanding the scope of the crisis, no junction could be made between country and city, the two complementary and contradictory sectors of Senegal's extroverted economy. The crisis was nevertheless sufficiently profound to oblige the government to institute serious reforms in the economic and political fields in order to ensure the regime's survival.

By a policy of progressive reforms the government sought to reinforce the position of the national bourgeoisie in order to serve as support for the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and to internationalize capital so as to free Senegal from the straitjacket of colonial economy. The second decade of independence thus began the first rupture with the old system under the pressure of numerous domestic oppositions and the demands of international capital. Of necessity, these reforms passed through a democratic portal.

24. H. Bourges and Cl. Wauthier, *Les 50 Afriques* (Paris, 1980), p. 395.

25. Casswell, "Autopsie," p. 66.

REFORMIST SENEGAL, 1970–1980

The political and social crisis in the cities, the malaise in the countryside, and the structural limitations of French capital, now unable to maintain its exclusive monopoly, gradually led Senegal to open itself up to international capital and proceed toward internal reform.

On the political level the UPS regime in 1970 carried out a constitutional reform creating the post of prime minister, in order to encourage young high officials to engage in politics. The regime also endeavored to encourage the birth of a national bourgeoisie so as to enlarge the social base of a power still dominated by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

At the economic level the regime attempted to free itself from the exclusive monopoly of French capital by opening Senegal to international capital. The state became the country's foremost entrepreneur, raising the level of participation and the innovative ability of local organizations and citizens in industrial creativity. But all these reforms did not stave off the economic, political, and social crises, which instead became worse because of the drought and of the weight of international capital on the Senegalese economy, cramped within its own frontiers. Political and union protest obliged the government to begin a process of democratization by authorizing opposition parties and unrestricted union activity. Liberalization of the regime, however, was not enough to resolve the profound crisis shaking Senegalese society. The time came when Senghor's departure became the lifesaver required to rescue the regime and ensure rotation of leading figures in the *de facto* single party.

Strikes by unions and students in 1968, peasant malaise, and the specter of drought hanging over Senegal at the end of the first decade of independence forced the government to undertake reforms at the political level.

On 16 and 17 May 1969 the UPS, the *de facto* single party holding power, organized a gigantic, dramatic production in an attempt to rejuvenate the structure of the political system. The UPS introduced administrative reforms, without resorting to politically oriented radical measures, to deal with the scope of the crisis in all fields at the close of this first decade of independence. The 1970 constitutional reform created the post of prime minister, entrusted to Abdou Diouf for the purpose of attracting a flood of young technicians and technocrats, as well as to serve as a buffer between the angry public and the president. This reformist decision was the origin of a break with Abdoulaye Ly, former leader of the PRA in Senegal, whose departure confirmed the UPS's orientation as the single party, as well as the concentration of power in the hands of President Senghor as head of both party and state. The re-election of Senghor in the 1973 elections with 97 percent of the votes cast reinforced the

presidential character of the regime despite the naming of a prime minister. Moreover, the intermingling of party and state became commonplace in the exercise of power dominated by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. On the economic level, this bureaucratic decision by the state was reflected in the priority given to the technocratic aspect in shaping development policy.

In external relations, the first effects of the international economic recession also forced the government to modify its development policy to some extent. In the new situation, international capital was prepared for a gradual redistribution of functions affecting capital formation at the Eurafican level to the benefit of policy-making centers at the capitalist periphery. At the local level this meant expanding the economic responsibilities of the state, which assumed, in the name of the national collectivity, all the roles of capitalist entrepreneur.²⁶

The state thus modified the banking system in order to finance such small and medium Senegalese enterprises as were able to adapt to the requirements of modern management. This reform was based on the renewal in 1973 of the West African Monetary Union. Thereafter, the state could exercise initiative and take control of a part of public development investments without submitting to the conditions of foreign loans. The jurisdiction of the Development Bank was broadened, and the role of the Union of Senegalese Banks—Union Sénégalaise des Banques (USB)—as the pilot enterprise of the economy's modern sector was strengthened. Public authority regulated the relations between national and foreign partners in the private production sector and encouraged the establishment of a Senegalese stock market to deal in shares of large foreign enterprises.²⁷

On this basis the state proceeded to the restructuring of the local banking structure so as to guarantee international access; it held 70 percent of the USB capital and 50 percent of the Banque Internationale pour le Commerce et l'Industrie du Sénégal (BICIS) capital. The First National City Bank opened its doors in 1977, while the Société Financière Sénégalaise pour le Développement de l'Industrie et du Tourisme (SOFISEDIT) was charged with attracting international public aid, and the Senegalo-Kuwaiti Bank with recycling, in association with local nationals, petroleum earnings into productive investments. In the 1970s, thus, we see an enhanced foreign public aid, formerly almost exclusively French, in the framework of a new worldwide division of industrial labor.

French aid through the central bank was extended more and more for the benefit of enterprises operated as mixed economic enterprises: to finance the

26. Rocheteau, *Pouvoir*, p. 365.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 366–67.

Taïba phosphates, the tuna-fishing fleet, the fertilizer factory, the Téranga hotel, and so forth. Senegal also sought among members of the European Community a complement to French aid, under provisions of the Lomé agreements. But it turned increasingly to international aid: the World Bank and Arab banks. Preoccupied with the balance of payments, the World Bank urged Senegal to develop solely profitable export industries and to foster agricultural development capable of absorbing surplus labor. The World Bank furthermore encouraged the participation of new private partners whose ability to provide financing made possible the consideration of large-scale projects. On the other hand, Arab participation was for Senegal a last resort when other possible sources of finance were exhausted, as in the case of the Richard Toll sugar complex and the free industrial zone. Arab financial surpluses also permitted Senegalese businessmen to get around the stringent conditions of association with European investors.²⁸

This opening of Senegal to international capital and the structural reforms introduced by the state coincided with the international economic recession, aggravated by the cycle of drought that began in 1973. Progressive decline of peanut production sharply limited the state's ability to negotiate with international capital. Structural dependence thus limited the effect of reforms in the economic field while accentuating the social crisis in the towns and countryside; the state was led to seek new courses of action.

From the first, the World Bank required Senegal to establish a realistic price policy by raising the price of imported foodstuffs and local agricultural products. This process gradually ended the transfer, to the state's advantage, of surpluses resulting from the rise in world prices for phosphates, peanuts, and cotton. Senegal altered its investment code so as to permit taxation of the earnings of foreign capital. In 1976 it created also a free industrial zone in order to attract to Senegal enterprises whose sources of supply and markets were located in developed countries. Paralleling the attempt to insert local nationals into the economic circuit, some public establishments of an industrial and commercial nature were transferred to the private or the mixed sectors. But the major industrial projects (the international fair, the industrial free zone, the naval repair facility, the petrochemical complex, the tourism complex on the *petite côte*) were carried out under control of the state, now vested with the entrepreneurial function.²⁹

In this way, nationalization of industrial initiative involved the emergence of a new elite combining the political function with managerial responsibilities. According to Rocheteau's formula, the governmental infrastructure

28. Ibid., p. 371.

29. Ibid., pp. 373-75.

and the national industrial technostucture coincided. The objective was the nationalization of the economy, which, however, encountered opposition from the French enterprises on the spot and found itself limited by the excessive weight of public debt contracted abroad to finance large industrial projects.³⁰ But it raised, too, the problem of the role of Senegalese private agents in this internationalization process, with the arrival en masse of new American, Japanese, or European partners.

In any case the state, having become the principal entrepreneur, continued, as during the first decade, to dominate the rural economy, the peanut production of which declined substantially. By diminishing the state's revenues, the drought accentuated the burden of external debt.

It was in this time of crisis that the state decided to strengthen its monopoly in the field of peanut marketing. ONCAD became a vast, uncontrollable machine, in effect a state within the state. With more than seventy-four hundred employees, ONCAD played an increasingly conspicuous role in the patronage mechanism. From an instrument of political control it became a source of political power, permitting the formation of an elite beyond the government's influence.³¹ The remarkable expansion of the ONCAD bureaucratic machine, meanwhile, coincided with the depression in peanut production. The rural recession had repercussions in the cities, where the state's industrialization policy was blocked, causing disaffection in the embryonic national bourgeoisie and discontent among the workers subjected to the "realistic" price policy. This coincidence of rural and urban crises, far surpassing those of the 1970s, obliged the Senghor government to embark on democratic concessions.

Despite efforts at modernization, production remained at a low level and suffered severely during the years of drought. Stagnation of the producers' standard of living kept pace with the precipitous fall in peanut production, which reached the sad level of two hundred thousand tons effectively marketed by ONCAD during 1980–1981. Senegal continued to suffer from a persistent drought that aggravated the rapid exhaustion of the peanut basin's poor, sandy soil. Famine settled in throughout the countryside, where the peasants systematically refused to pay their debts and boycotted the purchase of fertilizer and equipment offered under the agricultural program, while refusing to market their crops through the official channel.³²

The malaise of the peasantry accelerated the rural exodus to the cities and, paradoxically, reinforced the role of the marabouts, who, from collaboration,

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 375–78.

31. Casswell, "Autopsie," p. 71.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 45–50.

moved toward a sort of resistance, if not defiance, vis-à-vis the state. The caliph of the Murids, Abdou Lahatt Mbacké, publicly invited the peasants to engage in subsistence agriculture to free themselves of peanuts, the source of chronic indebtedness. Despite the rise in peanut prices and the assumption by the state of responsibility for repayment of debts, the schism between the government and the peasantry widened. It is this peasant opposition discreetly encouraged by the religious leaders that led Donal B. Cruise O'Brien to believe that the marabouts had been transformed into peasant unionists. For O'Brien, the mechanism for exploiting the rural world and the Sahel drought that together produced the peasant malaise of 1962–1973 enabled the chiefs of the Murid brotherhood to act as leaders of Africa's first independent rural trade union.³³

In any event, the decline in state revenue had repercussions in the cities, where the government, subjected more and more to the demands of the World Bank, put into effect sharp rises—of 40 percent to 60 percent—in the price of daily consumption products such as rice, oil, sugar, and bread. These increases intensified the discontent of the urban masses at the moment when the policy of supporting the national bourgeoisie met obstacles because of the monopoly held in all fields by international capital. The state was saddled with an enormous foreign debt, which rose to 176 billion CFA francs in 1976 and to 376 billion in 1980, or 69 percent of the gross domestic product. Senegal was stifled by the service of this debt that grew from year to year, obliging the country to request moratoriums and costly reschedulings. Furthermore, the political technocracy had diverted a substantial portion of the public assets, which led to the failure of state and mixed enterprises. ONCAD left behind 100 billions in debt; the Société Sénégalaise d'Armement à la Pêche (SOSAP), the fishing company, 12 billions; BUD Senegal, the Dutch market-gardening company, 10 billions; the Société d'Amenagement et d'Exploitation du Delta (SAED), the rice-growing company, 10 billions. Add to this an expenditure on foreign foodstuffs of 50 billions and on foreign energy of 65 billions, and the balance of trade was in deficit by 110 billions in 1980.³⁴

The failure of the state as entrepreneur brought with it the failure of the national bourgeoisie that had developed thanks to markets provided solely by the government. The embryonic national bourgeoisie was moribund for lack of state subsidies and especially because of the weight of private capital in edible oils, flour milling and petroleum. Bankruptcies multiplied on a vast scale among small enterprises in all fields, while the halt in economic growth

33. D. Cruise O'Brien, "Des bienfaits de l'inégalité: l'état et l'économie rurale au Sénégal," *Politique africaine* 14 (1984): 36.

34. Pathé F. Diagne, *Sénégal: Crise économique et sociale et devenir de la démocratie* (1984), pp. 18, 19, 20.

brought with it the unemployment of thousands of workers. The recession that set in in 1973 worsened and obliged the chief of state to introduce a policy of controlled and limited democratization. In order to stem the wave of urban and rural discontent, the 1976 constitutional revision defined three currents of opinion: the socialist-democratic current with the UPS, the liberal-democratic current with the PDS, and the Communist current with the PAI.

This controlled and robust opening up of democracy, however, brought no change in the nature of the president's authority, which was further reinforced by 82 percent of the votes in the 1978 elections. Recognition of an opposition to the UPS in Parliament was not enough to silence the voices of numerous clandestine political formations making themselves heard in the press or in the trade-union movement. The opposition press became more radical, while the struggle of the teachers in the *Syndicat Unique et Démocratique des Enseignants au Sénégal* (SUDES) set off a direct confrontation with the regime. Political and social malaise was the more serious because the economic recession intensified on account of the drought and especially the failure of the industrial development and foodstuffs self-sufficiency policies.

Senegal's orientation toward new sectors—fisheries, tourism, cotton growing, large irrigation projects—was not yet bearing fruit to compensate for the losses resulting from the economic continuity policy that emphasized peanut growing. To a great extent water and energy were lacking, and the state relied more and more on external aid, thus accentuating Senegal's dependent status. The country was near the point of crisis on the eve of a social confrontation when the departure of President Senghor, whether or not by his own free will, defused the bomb momentarily.

EPILOGUE: ABDOU DIOUF'S SUCCESSION

In January 1980 Abdou Diouf, prime minister since 1970, succeeded Senghor, who had become the focus of all opposition elements because of the length of his presidential reign. His departure constituted a precedent in the political life of independent Africa, as there was no previous example of an heir apparent acceding to power during the lifetime of a president.

Abdou Diouf defused the crisis by ending the conflict with SUDES through convoking the educational estates general and by legitimizing the existence of all parties. Thenceforth, fourteen political parties were recognized, making Senegal an islet of democracy in a contemporary Africa dominated by single-party systems. But the results of the presidential and legislative elections of February 1983 reinforced the monopoly of power held by the UPS, which remained in effect the single party. Abdou Diouf succeeded himself simply as heir to the Senegalese state's founding father. In order to assert effective

possession of his imposing inheritance at the economic and social levels, he chose to enhance presidential power at a moment when crisis in all domains demanded the sharing of power. As Pathé Diagne says, "Senegal's present constitution, which fails to take into account all the requirements of pluralism, calls at one and the same time for a presidential monarchy and a centralized Jacobin state of civil administrators, governors, prefects, heads of arrondissements, parties, churches and brotherhoods who, when all is said and done, substitute themselves for the people at all levels."³⁵

The exorbitant role of the state was further exaggerated at a moment when this colossus with feet of clay no longer had the financial means to support its gigantic bureaucracy or to assert any orientation effectively. Gradually the state abandoned its role as entrepreneur and left the industrial and agricultural sectors in the hands of private capital. This privatization of the economy began with the liquidation of ONCAD, which had until then symbolized the state's grip on the agricultural sector. The demise of ONCAD marks a new era in the history of Senegal, which will find it difficult to abandon the clientele politics of the post-colonial state, over-developed with respect to the available resources and lacking autonomy with respect to the various functions of the dominant class whose members contend among themselves for control of the state apparatus.³⁶

Above all, Senegal must resolve the profound economic crisis, which in all fields demands a political will that can hardly be expressed within the single-party framework, notwithstanding the window opened to democracy.

After a quarter-century of national independence Senegal today is experiencing a grave economic, political, and social crisis. In all domains this crisis is the result of the policy of continuity without noticeable break with the colonial period, which the first government, dominated by the personality of Léopold Sédar Senghor, established during this crucial period of accession to international sovereignty.

The case of Senegal, the oldest French colony in sub-Saharan Africa, is remarkable in its continuity, without any abrupt break, of the colonial system in place for a century and dominated by peanut monoculture. President Senghor, at the head of the party and the government, made sure that the economic privileges of French employers were maintained during the first decade, while strengthening the role of the state and the presidency in economic, political, and social life. During the second decade, disturbed by the first effects of the international economic recession and by internal political pressure, the president opened Senegal to international capital while at-

35. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

36. Casswell, "Autopsie," p. 73.

tempting to lay the groundwork for a national bourgeoisie on the initiative of the omnipotent state. Persistent drought substantially reduced the success of all these policies by reason of the importance of peanuts in the Senegalese economy and the preservation of the essential structures of a trade economy. The peaceful succession in the early 1980s did nothing to change the process of continual impoverishment in the Senegalese countryside or the entrenchment of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie that, by its illicit enrichment and its political blindness, prevented the formation of a genuine national bourgeoisie beyond the control of international capital. Senegal's dependence in all fields increased; in particular, the failure of the self-sufficiency policy in foodstuffs made superfluous the debate over the respective merits of socialism and capitalism. The partial democratization introduced in 1967 and extended in 1980 with the recognition of all opposition parties, and especially the political stability the country has enjoyed since independence, do not set Senegal fundamentally apart from the other contemporary African states whose evolution is marked by the strengthening of the state. Senegal is an example par excellence of continuity between colonial status and the attributes of international sovereignty. In this respect Senegal, like the other states of the French colonial domain, has not escaped the intensification of dependence, which accentuates underdevelopment in all fields.

We have intentionally insisted on the political debate before 1960 so as better to analyze the cleavage between the demands for equality and autonomy in the colonial period and the new management responsibilities of the new states. Léopold Sédar Senghor incontestably dominated both periods and for this reason it is difficult to pronounce judgment on the intellectual and political accomplishments of this strong personality. Many studies have been devoted to his literary works saluting the poet of the black condition, the humanist of universal civilization, and the man of dialogue, but also criticizing the ideology of the black condition as mere justification of neocolonialism. Nevertheless, the poet's long intellectual and political journey was crowned in 1984 by his entry into the French Academy. Yet his literary work has become inseparable from his political work, to the extent that it has profoundly marked Senegal's evolution since 1946.

At the time of his departure, Abdoulaye Ly emphasized the ambiguity of the political and cultural stances adopted by Senghor, an exceptional product of the colonial greenhouse. He played a prominent role in the colonial system's time of crisis and its prolongation as neocolonialism.³⁷ On the other hand, Pathé Diagne stresses the legend of a democratic Senghor fabricated by the media and the cunning of a man of politics who became the spokesman for

37. Abdoulaye Ly, in *Jaaye Doole Bi, The Proletarian* (11 Jan. 1981).

black culture or the struggles of the so-called third world. But on the domestic level he was a sovereign in his own way, within the framework of presidential monarchy.³⁸

Beyond the presidential power described as princely by Jackson and Rosemberg, Senghor's policy is characterized first and foremost by its continuity. A tireless defender of blackness, Senghor also believed deeply in France's genius and its civilizing mission in Africa. He believed in this model and in the ties of interdependence between the metropole and the colonies. It was through cooperation with France, broadened into the Euro-African framework, that Senegal should gradually free itself from the colonial pact. Under this ensign he governed independent Senegal as the incarnation of the last French proconsul.

Senegal's evolution without breaking sharply with the old colonial system is the unique feature of its experience, characterized by the building of the most orderly government institutions of the former AOF. But this source of strength in the post-colonial state runs the risk of crumbling away as a result of its inability to raise the country from its grave economic recession, and its lack of ability to develop economically, within the framework of the nation states emerging from the balkanization of Africa a quarter-century ago.

38. Pathé F. Diagne, *Quelle démocratie pour le Sénégal?* (1984), pp. 11–12.

12. *The Independence of Togo*

M A R C M I C H E L

On 27 April 1960 at Lomé, the chief of the new state of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio, proclaimed his country's independence during a special meeting of the Chamber of Deputies in the presence of the personal representative of the United Nations secretary-general, Dag Hammarskjöld, and the ambassador plenipotentiary of the French Republic, Louis Jacquinot. These were more than mere symbols, as Togo owed its constitutional evolution as much to the former minister of Overseas France as to the United Nations. President Olympio, however, made a special point of rendering a significant triple homage. He expressed the gratitude of the Togolese to the United Nations, which had supported them, to France, which had ensured that Togo "was never amalgamated with any neighboring country and our personality was always respected"; and, remarkably, to Germany, "historically the first to bring us modern life."¹

That the United Nations, France, and even Germany found themselves thus awarded good-conduct medals is not as surprising as it might appear. In different ways each had contributed to the new state's independence. The absence of any reference to England and the allusion, transparent and carrying a double meaning, to "neighboring" countries (Dahomey, certainly, Ghana even more) signified the ambiguity of the relations between the French-speaking elites and their English-speaking counterparts and the progressive deterioration of these relations as the colonies approached independence.

Three phases marked French Togo's evolution after World War II. The

1. Togo Legislative Assembly, 2d Legislature, *Débats*, 27 April 1960.

first, from 1945 to 1951, was that of the so-called Ewe question, characterized by the overlapping problems of the former German colony's two zones. This period, dominated by the demand for Ewe unification, was followed by a second phase dominated by the demand for unification of the two Togos but also, in 1956, the march toward separate destinies: the integration of the western sector into the future Ghana and the autonomy of the eastern part within the framework of the French Union. Finally, between 1956 and 1960 we witness an accelerated evolution toward international sovereignty and, in particular, a struggle for the succession among the dominant parties in eastern Togo during the transfer of power conducted by the tutelary power. It is the characteristics and significance of this evolution that we wish to define here.

On the eve of World War II, Togo occupied a place of its own in the French Union then being created.² Public opinion expressed itself with some distinctive features: the first, later wiped out by the victory over Germany, was a Germanophilia like that in Cameroon, widespread among the common people and the advanced elite. This sentiment, or one might say sentimentalism, was based generally on a mythology of the German colonization. It had given birth only to an embryonic movement, the Togobund, whose public is difficult to evaluate but which may have gone beyond a few persons nostalgic for bygone times, especially in Ewe country.³ In any event the German period had left the memory of a region less artificially carved up than after 1919, and the memory nourished resentment. A second characteristic stemmed from the attractiveness of the British neighbor, not just because the frontier had erected only a feeble barrier to movement between the two mandates and a genuine, tightly woven network of family and commercial relations had developed, but also because the rapid economic strides made in the Gold Coast had conferred enormous prestige on Great Britain. The Togolese elites, recruited from a merchant bourgeoisie accustomed for centuries to dealing with Europeans, were now so closely linked with their partners in the neighboring territory that in 1941 it was possible to assert that "all those who live by trade are English-trained."⁴ A third characteristic was an acute awareness of Togo's special juridical status, which also nourished the particularism of elites hostile to integration into the French system and a highly developed sense of the value of the dominant group's culture: that of the Ewe.⁵ Naturally, this selec-

2. The basic work by Robert Cornevin, *Histoire du Togo*, 3d ed. (Paris, 1969) needs updating.

3. See J. J. Fol, "Le Togo pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale," *Revue d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale* 115 (July 1979): 69-77.

4. Inspection report by Bourgeois-Gavardin on the political situation in Togo, Dakar, 10 Sept. 1941, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 634/4.

5. On the Ewe question, see the essential work C. E. Welch, *Dream of Unity* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966), and the basic article by François Luchaire, "Du Togo français sous tutelle à la république autonome du Togo," *Librairie Generale de Droit et de Jurisprudence*, 1957.

tive sense ignored the other components of the population and equated the nascent nationalism with Ewe nationalism.

One should not, however, conclude that these elites, before and after the war, regarded France with hostility or even indifference, behind their obligatory protestations of loyalty. In reality this bourgeoisie, in part of Brazilian and mixed-blood origin, was deeply divided by successive and cosmopolitan influences. One of the most important families, the Olympios, is a good example: "its old chief (Octaviano) served the Germans faithfully, Dr. Olympio (Sylvanus) has an English education, and the youngest Olympio (Pedro) is French at heart and in language."⁶

In the end these divisions were to undermine the pan-Ewe movement, but it is certain that the war intensified Anglophilia and the hopes of the Ewes. They had taken the disruptions caused by events much to heart. The border closing under Vichy had been a failure, and the Ewes had been stupefied to see official posters "aim at the former English friends accusations or vehement epithets formerly reserved for an entirely different target." The malaise became so evident that "the White suddenly [had] the impression that the Black was looking down upon him" and that the colonial officials no longer had anyone around them but polite natives.⁷ Supply difficulties and the effort demanded by the Gaullists later had hardly increased affection toward France, particularly among the Ewe encouraged by the accomplishments of their English-speaking cousins. In September 1943, indeed, the British authorities had been embarrassed to receive the first petition asking for the restoration of the former Togo under their shepherdship, or at the very least the abolition of customs restrictions.⁸ The *évolués*, furthermore, understood as early as 1945 the perspectives opened up by the creation of the United Nations, and accused France of "seeking to deprive the Togolese of any possibility of obtaining the self-government they might attain through the trusteeship system."⁹

Here it was a question of a literal interpretation of the Brazzaville Conference resolutions, of which they demonstrated perfect knowledge when Governor Noutary convened a local conference to examine the resolutions

6. Bourgeois-Gavardin report cited in n. 4 above.

7. Jean Nouvelon, "Note on the State of Mind of the Natives since June 1940," Paris, 10 June 1941, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 894/5 (by a missionary in Togo).

8. Petition from Togoland subject under British Mandate, 26 Sept. 1943; replies by O. Stanley and A. Eden, 28 Jan. and 4 Feb. 1944 ("HMG are unwilling as well as unable to upset international arrangement by unilateral action. . . . HMG have no desire to increase the territories under their own administration in West Africa at the expense of their French ally"), PRO, FO 371/42150.

9. Report on the Political Situation . . . in the Territory of Togo from 1 Aug. to 16 Sept. 1945, AN, 72 AJ 538.

jointly.¹⁰ The *évolués*, of whom the two principal representatives were Hyacinthe da Silva and Sylvanius Olympio, took the occasion to assert their particularism and to protest against France's assimilationist and "integrationist" intentions, notably against the use of native languages in education. But they appreciated the limitations of their Ewe particularism less when the administration conferred on them a sort of status as privileged spokesmen, excluding any dialog with the north.¹¹

Immediately after the war the ear of the elites was the object of rivalry between two forces: the Togolese Unity Committee (CUT), founded in 1938 with the support of the French administration but dominated by the merchant bourgeoisie after 1941, and the Togolese Progressive Party (PTP), which was formed in April 1946 and recruited its members among civil servants and southern chiefs. The rivalry between client factions and organized "parties," at least at first, was incarnated in their leaders, Sylvanius Olympio and Nicolas Grunitzky. While Grunitzky emerged slowly on the local scene, Olympio had exercised influence for several years. Grunitzky, defeated in the November 1946 elections for deputy to the French National Assembly, had to leave responsibility for consolidating the party to his colleagues, Dr. Robert Ajavon, Frédéric Brenner (of mixed blood), and Pedro Olympio, who was later to desert. On the other hand, Sylvanius Olympio's influence and the popularity of the CUT, were unchallengeable after the 1946 elections, which gave the deputy's seat to Martin Akou.

The CUT espoused a pan-Ewe ideology and close ties with the All-Ewe Conference, spearheaded by Daniel Chapman in Togoland. The hostility of the French administration is therefore not surprising: to it the CUT appeared to be "a minority . . . of black-marketeers"; Sylvanius Olympio, "a notorious Anglophile," was suspected of serving the interests of the very powerful United African Company (UAC), of which he was the general agent in Togo, and the accusation continued to be made until the French authorities obtained his dismissal in 1952.¹² The authorities seemed at first to have feared a separatism unofficially encouraged by the British much more than a radical anti-colonial challenge.

The divisions among the elite were counted on to combat these centrifugal tendencies. The CUT's hesitation between the two possible tactics of participation or abstention vis-à-vis the new perspectives in political life opened up by

10. *Commission chargée d'exprimer son avis sur les modalités d'application au Togo des recommandations de la Conférence de Brazzaville* (Lomé, 1945).

11. Minutes of 11–12 May 1945 of the commission cited in n. 10 above.

12. Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 112. On the French complaints against the UAC, see ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 406, Note on the UAC, undated (1945) and PRO, FO 371/80643, correspondence on the subject of the UAC.

the 1946 reforms might favor its adversaries. But the CUT chose an external counterattack, and its appeal to international opinion was certainly the Ewe movement's greatest innovation; no other movement in Africa had dreamt of having recourse to it. Indeed, from 1947 on, the United Nations was flooded with petitions that obliged the administering powers to adopt a common policy despite their differences.

France was unquestionably more reluctant to accept the new international rules than was Great Britain. The latter had resolved to pursue a very pragmatic policy provided her vital interests were not threatened. At the beginning of 1946, thus, London had decided to place her African mandates under U.N. trusteeship, since none of these regions could be considered strategic, and to follow a course that would lead to self-government and independence.¹³ Paris joined the trusteeship system only after "certain hesitations," and reserved the right of her former mandates to enter the French Union.¹⁴ Furthermore, an effort was made to limit concessions to international opinion, then encouraged by the Americans. It was announced that "a consultation of the qualified representatives of the local population" had been conducted; it was limited to a meeting of the director of political affairs at Rue Oudinot, Henri Laurentie, and the three deputies elected in 1945 in Dahomey, Togo, and Cameroon: Apithy, Aujoulat, and the Reverend Father Bertho.¹⁵

Meanwhile, the Ewe movement had already gone on the offensive. Sylvanius Olympio had met with the All-Ewe Conference leaders at Accra at the end of 1946; the appeal to the United Nations was initiated on 2 April 1947 with the famous telegram requesting "unification of the Ewes' country under a single administration chosen by plebiscite." Petitions followed, and finally Sylvanius Olympio came to plead his cause, which impressed a majority of the Trusteeship Council.¹⁶

The administering powers found themselves obliged to reach agreement.

13. Franco-British correspondence on the subject of Togo, July–Aug. 1946, PRO, FO 371/6001.

14. Minister of Overseas France to Commissioner in Republic of Cameroon, 16 Feb. 1946, AN, 72 AJ 537, and "Note on the United States Statement on the Trusteeship Agreements," 27 June 1946, 72 AJ 538. Here we have drawn on our communication to the colloquium on "Preambles to Decolonization of the French Empire (1936–1956)" organized by Charles-Robert Ageron at the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent, Paris, 4–5 Oct. 1984: Marc Michel, "Le Togo dans les relations internationales au lendemain de la guerre: prodrome de la décolonisation ou petite mésentente cordiale? (1945–1951)."

15. Acting Minister of Overseas France Laurentie to high commissioners in Republic of Cameroon and Togo, Sept. 1946, AN, 72 AJ 537.

16. Cf. Alex Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound: Reflections of an African Statesman* (New York, 1963), pp. 129–30, cited in Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 78.

But the formation of a sort of “colonial front” was not achieved without difficulty. On the French side there was a conviction that the construction of the French Union had no flaw through which the self-government virus could penetrate, and an inability to understand how the British partner could permit the development of propaganda so obviously anti-French and dangerous with regard to public order, for “you begin with the stick and end up with firearms.”¹⁷ On the British side there was no inclination to put up bail for either the objectives of the French or their methods, and a certain embarrassment that could not always be hidden. In 1947 some high Colonial Office officials, including Assistant Under Secretary J. S. Bennett, considered that it would be necessary to “choose between our interest as an ally of France on one hand and, on the other, our general interest regarding colonial affairs on the international plane.”¹⁸ The Ewe question thus was assigned a somewhat disproportionate importance. Kenneth Robinson, promoted to head the West African Department of the Colonial Office, brought things back to their proper order; the senior officials responsible for African affairs at the Colonial and Foreign offices decided to pursue the policy of collaboration with France. However, even the quite Francophile Robinson, commenting on a conversation in June 1947 between the minister, Creech Jones, the under secretary, Ivor Thomas, and the pastor Beata, Ewe representative in the Gold Coast Legislative Council, could not keep himself from approving, unofficially, accusations against the French administration.¹⁹ Finally, the governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Alan Burns, admitted his difficulties in speaking the same language as his partners and making them understand “that suppressing freedom of speech would be entirely contrary to our conception of democratic principles.”²⁰

The will to reach agreement, faced with the Ewe offensive, won out on both sides and led to presentation of a joint memorandum to the U.N. Trusteeship Council at its November 1947 session. It was in fact a counterattack, since the proposed Permanent Mixed Consultative Commission did not embrace specifically Ewe affairs, but general Togolese affairs, so as to emphasize the existence of other demographic components. The Trusteeship Council nevertheless requested that the “aspirations of the Ewe people” be recognized. This was also a change of direction in the French attitude, for it was desired not only to “disarm criticism” but to “draw from one local experience conclu-

17. Minister of foreign affairs to minister of Overseas France, 6 Jan. 1948, AN, 72 AJ 537, commentary by Guy Monod, in charge of African affairs at the Quai.

18. Bennett note of 27 Feb. 1947, PRO, CO 537/2037.

19. Ivor Thomas to J. S. Bennett, memorandum of conversation among Creech Jones, Thomas, and the pastor, Beata, minuted by K. Robinson, 17 June 1947, PRO, CO 537/2037.

20. Burns to Cohen, 19 Mar. 1947, PRO, CO 537/2037.

sions applicable, should the case arise, to other territories calling for Franco-British entente in Africa."²¹

Thenceforth, cooperation between the two administering powers, previously hesitant, functioned fairly correctly at both the local and the international levels, where an already biased public opinion had first to be "educated." In the Trusteeship Council the common front was easily broadened to include the Belgians, so that in 1948 Laurentie, who had become deputy to the chief of the French delegation, Roger Garreau, could write (with a little exaggeration) that the institution had "established itself once for all in the most authentic colonialism."²² More and more, the opposition arose from the General Assembly and the U.N.'s Fourth Committee; it was urged on by small countries such as the Philippines, Syria, and India, and, especially in 1949, encouraged by the United States to the point that French delegate P. O. Lapie became greatly alarmed at the Americans' return to "the anti-colonial bent so firmly anchored in Roosevelt's mind."²³

As for the Ewe problem, the tutelary powers had reached agreement in 1948 according to principles that the Directorate of Political Affairs for Overseas France (FOM) summarized aptly at the time:

The British and French governments consider that in West Africa the proper policy is not that of creating a large number of small, isolated groups, but one that seeks to encourage the latter to develop within the framework of larger groups. It would seem to be a mistake on the part of the responsible authorities in West Africa if, taking account of the somewhat exceptional case of the Ewes, they tended to adopt a system dividing the continent into a mosaic of rival countries.²⁴

In these conditions one could but move toward partial and technical arrangements, such as customs and fiscal facilities, harmonization of health and education policies, and so forth that would not question the territorial and institutional framework bequeathed by colonization. In the Consultative Committee the unificationists were drawn into a rearguard action without result: the representatives of France and Great Britain even felt strong enough to express before the committee the disapproval of their governments. But the Ewes' objective receded just as much because of dissention

21. Minister of foreign affairs to minister of Overseas France, 6 Jan. 1948, AN, 72 AJ 537. Cf. Marc Michel, "La coopération internationale en Afrique noire, 1942-1950," *Relations internationales* 34 (Summer 1983): 155-70.

22. Laurentie to Labonne, 13 May 1948, AN, 72 AJ 537.

23. Lapie to Schuman, New York, 9 Nov. 1949, letter transmitted to André Letourneau, ANSOM, Aff. Pol 2225/2. See also Michel, "Coopération internationale."

24. Memorandum on the Ewe question, no date (1949), official position of the Directorate of Political Affairs, Ministry of Overseas France (Delavignette), ANSOM, 19 PA 221.

among the “unifiers”: ancient disputes between “tribal” factions (Anlo and Ewe) and quarrels between English- and French-speakers. On the English-speaking side, the Togoland Union, a movement reorganized in 1947, gradually nibbled away the following of the All-Ewe Conference by confronting it with a nationalism transcending ethnic barriers that, in mid-1949, opened the way for the approaching triumph of Nkrumah’s Convention People’s party (CPP). In November 1949 the visiting U.N. mission was flooded with PTP petitions also using the weapon of international opinion. The mission prudently concluded that “the Territory’s inhabitants are far from agreed on an administrative and political solution . . . including the Ewe representatives themselves.”²⁵ Pursuing their counteroffensive, Paris and London then proposed the transformation of the Consultative Committee into one broadened to include all regions of both territories. As Andrew Cohen, the all-powerful official in charge of West Africa in the Colonial Office, explained to Arden Clarke, governor of the Gold Coast, the northerners had to be included in the political game.²⁶ The Trusteeship Council accepted the second Franco-British memorandum, and elections for the new committee took place during September and October 1950; the unificationists lost. The CUT then chose to boycott the committee, while appealing to the United Nations against France’s “anti-democratic practices.” This “empty chair” policy condemned Ewe nationalism either to disappear or to transform itself. Changes in the political situation in 1951 and later accelerated the decision.

Togo’s first nationalist phase, thus, ended in defeat. The pan-Ewe movement had been the first in black Africa to resort to the weapon of world opinion and call the colonial frontiers into question. At first it had met with genuine sympathy at the United Nations, but the tutelary powers soon regained possession of themselves and were able to set up an effective common front and convincing arguments against it: Ewe reunification could only lead to the emergence of a weak, tiny state; it would constitute the starting point for processes of disintegration of the existing territorial units, which would be uncontrollable. Everyone was conscious of this, and the United Nations implicitly admitted it by accepting the enlargement of the Mixed Consultative Committee to include the other components of the two Togos’ population.

This situation contributed greatly to the redefinition of nationalism in Togo at the outset of the second phase, in 1951. In January, at the CUT congress convened at Palimé, Sylvanus Olympio won a new program demanding independence within five years for a reunified Togo, under U.N. auspices.

25. Joint observations to the general secretary, 19 June 1950, PRO, 537/5713; see also Lu-chaire, “Du Togo français,” pp. 61–66.

26. Cohen to Arden-Clarke, 12 Apr. 1950, PRO, CO 537/5713.

This radical revision of claims replaced ethnic nationalism with territorial nationalism. At the same time it responded to the evolution taking place in the British territory, where the Togoland Union of S. G. Antor had separated from the All-Ewe Conference and was now preaching unity with French Togo.

Actually, the strength of this alliance was only happenstance and was swiftly shattered by the rise to power of Nkrumah in the Gold Coast. In February 1951, the CPP having won the elections in the colony, Nkrumah was called to head the Executive Council as chief minister, and Governor Arden Clarke began a process of transfer of power that he pursued resolutely until 5 March 1957.²⁷ Thenceforth British conduct, while undergoing some oscillations, corresponded well with the constitutional reform principles laid down by Andrew Cohen with respect to relations with France in West Africa:

These reforms are based on the following principles: that a sense of responsibility can only be created by growing responsibilities; that no constitution which did not provide for full participation by Africans would have any chance of success under present conditions in West Africa and that such a constitution provides the best defense against Communism. . . . Our policy has been criticised by the French as moving too fast. We cannot for the reasons just given accept this criticism. . . . We can moreover reassure the French.²⁸

This choice had direct implications for the Togolese question. In 1951 the CPP gained ground in western Togo and recruited some particularly important Ewe leaders. From then on other leaders alerted their compatriots against their rivals in Gold Coast and denounced the "black imperialists" seeking to annex Togoland.²⁹ In 1952 these fears became explicit when, on 5 February, Nkrumah declared his intention of "liberating" French Togo as soon as the "Gold Coast is independent and British Togo also."³⁰ Not only did Nkrumah make "official" his decision to annex British Togo, he let it be suspected that he had decided to absorb French Togo as well. In 1953 the "secret plan" affair confirmed the fears: it put the CPP leader in an embarrassing position and forced him to deny the authenticity of the document attributed to his government. But its publication in July, at the very moment Nkrumah set forth his

27. Cf. Roland Oliver, "Arden Clarke and N'Krumah, 1949-1957," *Etudes africaines offertes à Henri Brunschwig* (Paris, 1982), pp. 411-21.

28. Memorandum by Andrew Cohen on Franco-British relations in West Africa, 20 Nov. 1951, PRO, CO 537/4148.

29. *Togoland Vanguard*, 12 Oct. 1951, quoted in Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 103.

30. Speech by Nkrumah at Kopdze, South Togoland, 5 Feb. 1952, quoted in Luchaire, "Du Togo français," p. 79.

famous "Motion of Destiny" asking London to set a date for self-government, produced a crisis of confidence among unificationists and, especially, a deep controversy in British Togo. The latter was, in fact, moving toward integration with the Gold Coast. After the renewed CPP victory in the 1954 elections the British government announced that it was prepared to request the termination of its trusteeship in the part of Togo for which it was responsible, and suggested a plebiscite to the Trusteeship Council in a memorandum of 23 June 1954.

Such a policy might at first blush have disturbed the French. In reality, it reinforced their theses. In 1955, when the question of a plebiscite on the reunification of Togoland took shape, Léon Pignon, then director of political affairs at Rue Oudinot, considered that the reconstitution of the former German Togo was an out-of-date question, as it had been only "a theoretical entity devoid of either ethnic or geographic unity," and that the two territories resulting from its partition were "now and henceforth profoundly different."³¹ At the same time the two ministers, Teitgen and Lennox-Boyd, reached agreement during the Franco-British consultations that had become routine. In case of a plebiscite, it was necessary to avoid a fragmentation of British Togo that, according to Teitgen, "if applied generally could end in a Balkanization of West Africa." The future plebiscite in Togoland had furthermore to be considered an exceptional process, not a precedent, for which the responsibility would be shouldered by the British government alone. Finally, the French government agreed to delay until 1956 the announcement of its own referendum on the new institutions planned for eastern Togo.³² Both sides, as of 1955, thus considered separation an accomplished fact; in addition, it permitted France to carry out reform plans that would make it easier to transfer power to "friendly" hands.

Before reaching that point, however, relations between the French administration and the Togolese parties were tense. In 1951 they were at an impasse. The CUT, boxed in by its boycott tactic—and its English-speaking friends—refused to participate in setting up an "enlarged" mixed tribunal in which it would be certain to lose its majority. It no doubt felt that it would triumph in the end, as American support in the United Nations could apparently be counted on. Indeed, following the CUT's complaints against the elections, the Americans had adopted a harder line against the French and supported proposals for new referenda submitted to the United Nations for

31. Memorandum concerning the Togolese question by the Directorate of Political Affairs of the Ministry of Overseas France, 1955, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 2225/2. Léon Pigno had replaced Delteil at the directorate as of Oct. 1954.

32. Minutes of Teitgen-Lennox Boyd, 14 Nov. 1955, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 2182/2.

approval.³³ At the end of February the report on the 1950 elections made to the United Nations on France's behalf by Attorney General Baptiste calmed feelings somewhat.³⁴ Above all, the French and British proposed to replace the "broadened" Mixed Consultative Committee with a Mixed Council for Togolese Affairs that would provide "advice" in political and other fields; its composition would be proportional to the populations. Extension of its purview to the political field was included at the request of the United States, and the proportionality at that of the minister, Louis Jacquinot.³⁵

As it turned out, this second attempt failed. The unificationists, who were now struggling for the union of the two Togos, demanded parity of representation for each territory, knowing that proportionality would benefit only their adversaries. The latter had been considerably strengthened by the creation of the Union of Chiefs and Populations of the North (UCPN). Using their entree at the United Nations, particularly the Fourth Committee, the opponents procured the repudiation of the Trusteeship Council's act by the General Assembly; on 18 January 1952 the assembly decided against the Mixed Council for the Unification of Togo and for the dispatch of a new visiting mission. Twenty days before its arrival on 1 August, however, the authorities in the two territories decided to convene the Mixed Council. The opposition members left it almost at once, preferring to present their demands to the visiting mission. The latter, however, received petitions from both sides, and its findings remained inconclusive.

Thenceforth the Ewe problem took second place to that of unification of the Togos, the opponents of which worked to mobilize their friends in the United Nations. In December 1952 the General Assembly was well aware of this new orientation but nevertheless rejected the idea of transferring the tutelage to the United Nations. This time the United States did go along; it applied the brakes more and more to its anti-colonialism, even though it seemed to have embraced a quite peculiar concept of a French Union in which "both French Togolands could become as free and sovereign in their association with France as India and Pakistan . . . in their association with Great Britain."³⁶ In these conditions 1953 was a year of anticipation, preparation, and consultation, with parties, associations, chiefs, and notables in both Togos regarding the eventual reconstitution of a Mixed Council, this time elected by universal suffrage. However, the rapid evolution of the situation in the Gold Coast and the fear of annexation encouraged the formation of an overwhelming majority in French

33. Burns to Glasworthy, 21 Feb. 1951, PRO, CO 537/7178.

34. Report by Attorney General Baptiste, 27 Feb. 1951, PRO, CO 537/7178.

35. Cf. Luchaire, "Du Togo français," pp. 70-71.

36. U.N. *Information Weekly*, 1 Mar. 1954.

Togo against this solution. By October 1953 the administration had collected 840 hostile petitions and in January 1954 could show seventeen thousand votes of no on eleven hundred voter's rolls, as compared with fifty-odd positive responses.³⁷ These results assisted the French policy of weakening the CUT; after the announcement of an early British withdrawal from Togoland, the French considered the CUT to be "stagnating."³⁸

Indeed, the CUT had met with successive setbacks since 1951. The creation in September of a harder-line, more active wing of the party, Juvento, supported by students in France, disturbed those of the French authorities who were most determined to react. Juvento demanded independence; its militants were younger, but its founders—Mensah Aitson, Ben Apoloo, Boniface Dovi, François Amorin—had considerable political experience. Apoloo, a businessman, was considered Anglophile and a "nationalist," "very influential and very popular"; Aitson had tried unsuccessfully to form a branch of the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) at Lomé and had launched the newspaper *Negréta*, which became Juvento's organ. Amorin, a lawyer first known as a loyal collaborator in 1946, now passed for an "extremist" formerly associated with the Communists.³⁹ The mutual hardening led to violent incidents, the most serious of which was at Vogan in August 1951, when a conflict between members and adversaries of the CUT over the leadership of that chiefdom degenerated into an attack on the administrative post; the guard returned fire and killed seven persons. Under the direction of Governor Digo the authorities took advantage of the situation to take measures against those who claimed to be "nationalists"; fifty-one persons were indicted (five in absentia). Their trial was held in January 1954 during the tour of Digo's successor, Laurent Péchoux considered the *bête noire* of the opposition. It culminated in severe sentences to forced labor and prison, which gave satisfaction to an administration then little inclined to indulgence. "The C.U.T. leaders seem very impressed," commented the territory's Political Bureau.⁴⁰ This tension persisted until autumn 1954, when Péchoux was recalled. He knew Togo particularly well, as he had served there before the war and had returned with the reputation of having "broken up" the RDA in the Ivory Coast. The CUT-Juvento had accused him of continuing a policy of intima-

37. Directorate of Political Affairs, Second Bureau, Togo, Mixed Council, no date (Jan. 1954), ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

38. Note by the Directorate of Political Affairs, Ministry of Overseas France, on political parties in Togo, 23 July 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3297.

39. Péchoux to Jacquinot, transmitting information concerning the leaders of Juvento, 4 Apr. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3297.

40. Cameroun-Togo synthesis by the Directorate of Political Affairs, Ministry of Overseas France, Sept.–Oct. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

tion and repression in Togo. One may, however, point out that the press retained an astonishing freedom of expression and that the CUT was able to boast of having "had" the governor. Meanwhile, in October 1954 the change in tone was quite noticeable and the opposition press greeted the Mendès-France cabinet by "doffing its hat."⁴¹ The opposition appeared to have chosen the appeasement route.

The CUT-Juvento was in fact led to a compromise. In 1951 France decided, apparently on the initiative of the minister, Jacquinot, to make Togo a "showcase" of the French Union. For this it was necessary to construct rapidly the framework for Western-style democratic political life. The first step, in 1951, was the introduction of electoral procedures for selecting members of the District Councils, which were to replace the old Councils of Notables. The second step was the abolition on 6 February 1952 of the dual constituency, despite strong pressure on Jacquinot by his rightist friends in France.⁴² Togo thus became the only French black African territory, save Senegal, without electoral discrimination. The third step, in November 1955, was the transformation of the mixed communes of Lomé, Anécho, Atakpamé, and Sokodé into districts with full powers. These reforms were accompanied by a growing electorate, which rose from 7,963 voters in 1948 to 28,580 in 1951 and 190,664 in 1955, for a population of about 1,100,000 inhabitants; the vote was opened to women in 1951. Universal suffrage was introduced in 1956, and this produced a sudden diffusion of political life among the people, particularly as they were invited in greater and greater numbers to frequent referenda (five, for example, between 1951 and 1955).

These reforms were denounced by the nationalist parties. This was less paradoxical than it might appear, since the extension of voting rights benefited the moderates. The UCPN had recruited almost all the chiefs, including those who had belonged for a time to the CUT and were now disturbed by the affinities of that party with Nkrumah's CPP, actively working against their counterparts in the Gold Coast. The UCPN also held tight control of the electorate in the north and reinforced the PTP in local institutions, which these two parties easily dominated with the administration's help. On 17 June 1951 Grunitsky was elected Togo's deputy in the French National Assembly, defeating Martin Akou, and was reelected "triumphantly" in 1956. During August and September 1951 the PTP won 48 seats in the District Councils in the south and the UCPN 82 in the north; the CUT had to settle for 28 seats. In the Representative Assembly elections of December 1951, March 1952, and finally June 1955, the PTP-UCPN alliance crushed its opponents by obtaining

41. Analysis of the local press, note for the Directorate of Political Affairs, Ministry of Overseas France, Sept.-Oct. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

42. Luchaire, "Du Togo français," p. 90.

70 percent of the territorial representation.⁴³ In short, by 1955 all was ready for a new step: the construction of a local executive.

This road had been paved some time before, and Robert Buron, minister of Overseas France in the Mendès-France cabinet, made the announcement in December 1954, after a trip to Togo during which he received, at Palimé, the "obligatory" folkloric greeting by six thousand small children, each waving two small tricolor flags!⁴⁴ Creation of the executive had been started by Minister Jacquinot and his successor, Robert Buron, who in 1955 had succeeded in setting up a Government Council along the pattern of the French Establishments in India. But this council was not truly representative in character and lacked the powers that would have made it a genuine responsible government, just as the Representative Assembly did not play the role of a true legislative assembly. The opposition was able to question its legitimacy and independence with some success before the United Nations, particularly as the moderates were not without fault, as was shown by the creation in 1954 of a dissident party, the Togolese Popular Movement (MPT). The new party had its origins in divergent views among the PTP leaders, and it was directed by secessionists: Pedro Olympio and John Atayi.⁴⁵ By 1955 its alignment with the CUT was no longer in doubt. In 1954, furthermore, the opposition had launched the idea of a simultaneous plebiscite in both territories in 1955, before the departure of the British; an idea Paris considered "extremely dangerous, for it [ran] the risk of a favorable reception among the partisans of unification sitting in the UN."⁴⁶

It is certain that these considerations stimulated France's determination to provide its territory with a statute that would allow the mortgage of U.N. control to be paid off. To this end use could be made of the future constitutional law on which Pierre-Henri Teitgen had begun work. The moderates, moreover, were urging the government to act; the PTP in June and the Representative Assembly in July issued formal appeals to this effect. By the end of 1955 the statute was ready, and the idea may even have been to proceed to a referendum "before the British."⁴⁷ It was the promise given to the latter to await the results of the "English" referendum, as well as resistance by the Council of the Republic in France, that delayed the announcement.

In short, during this second phase the CUT's new strategy had failed, but it

43. Ibid., pp. 95–96, and Welch, *Dream of Unity*, pp. 112ff.

44. Journey by Robert Buron, 31 Oct.–2 Nov. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

45. Cameroun-Togo synthesis, July–Aug., Sept., and Oct. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

46. Cameroun-Togo Synthesis, July–Aug. 1954, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3280.

47. Note by the Directorate of Political Affairs, Ministry of Overseas France, no date (Pignon, 1955), ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 2182/3.

had maintained its position as the sole opposition force. At the outset of the third phase the failure seemed to become even more pronounced. The hope for unification finally vanished, and local power passed into the hands of its adversaries, friends of France. As a seeming paradox, however, the situation completely reversed itself two years later, in 1958. Was this proof of the inanity of the policy pursued by France and of the nonrepresentative character of the "moderate" parties and hence, as a corollary, the conquest of power by "radicals" seeking rupture, rather than continuity, with France?

The first great disappointment of the CUT's opponents, in 1956, was obviously the result of the plebiscite in Togoland on 6 May. The issues on the ballot were criticized by the unificationists and their friends in the United Nations (Czechs, Bulgarians, and Filipinos): they were deemed too difficult "even for educated persons." The response was not completely uniform, since a majority opposed to attachment to the Gold Coast won a clear victory in the southern districts.⁴⁸ But the overall result was indisputable, and Great Britain recognized it. At the United Nations, India, which had previously supported the opponents, now preached the integration thesis in view of the approaching admission of the future Ghana. Annexation was thus unanimously approved by the Trusteeship Council, along with the termination of trusteeship. The Togo question was then placed for the last time on the agenda of the interministerial discussions a little more than a year later. The British government was visibly pleased to point out to the French that "this problem was no longer within its jurisdiction, in view of Ghana's independent status."

The plebiscite of 6 May 1956 in Togoland removed a major obstacle to France but left her with fiercely competing parties in eastern Togo. For the CUT-Juvento the prospect was thenceforth to be true independence that would eliminate the domains France intended to reserve for herself within the future constitutional arrangement, in the areas of defense, currency, and sovereignty in external affairs. Therefore it was necessary to retain international support (and thus the trusteeship) against France's "maneuvers" and to mobilize local opinion against the temporizers by use of the magic slogan *Ablodé* (independence). For France, on the contrary, the victory of the moderates had to be consolidated by means of the introduction of suitable institutions and a referendum-plebiscite. It would then be possible to draw the teeth of agitation for independence and even to have the legitimacy of French policy recognized by the United Nations. Above all, fast action was required; decisions were hastened by the imminent independence of Ghana, but also by the municipal elections planned for November 1956, for "with a CUT mayor in the capital and, on the western border, an adversary in the form of a black state

48. Cf. Welch, *Dream of Unity*, pp. 115ff.

enjoying U.N. sympathy, there was the risk of conducting the referendum operation in very unfavorable conditions.”⁴⁹

The adoption of the constitutional law on 23 June helped this policy. In July France announced its intention to provide Togo with a new constitution and to organize a referendum. In August the constitution was drafted, and on the 24th a decree declared the creation of the Autonomous Republic of Togo, which was proclaimed on the 30th. The Representative Assembly was transformed into a legislative assembly, and Nicolas Grunitzky was installed as prime minister; on 18 September, on the eve of the visit of Gaston Defferre, minister of Overseas France in Guy Mollet's socialist cabinet, Grunitzky introduced his own government; on the same day the Republic received its national symbols: a flag, a coat of arms, and a national anthem.⁵⁰ Finally, on 28 October the popular vote on the autonomy statute took place. The terms of the debate had been clearly expounded before the assembly on 14 August: should we follow those who believe in France's sincere desire to “turn over a page in its colonial history” and in the possibility of “achieving our self-government without having to shoulder the crushing burdens imposed by the organs of external sovereignty, thus achieving independence within interdependence”; or should we follow those who ask “what confidence can be placed in France, in false pretenses,” and “why settle our country's fate in this way, once and for all . . . is there no Indochina? No Tunisia or Morocco? Even today, is there not Algeria?”⁵¹ But—and the argument was a weighty one—autonomy within the French Union would make possible continued help from the Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et Social (FIDES).⁵²

Was the electoral body aware of this debate? In all truth one cannot say for sure. In appearance, the victory of “autonomy” over “independence” was overwhelming: more than two-thirds of the votes in the south and 80 percent in the north.⁵³ However, the report of the French government's commissioner, Périer de Féral, corrects these figures. In the first place, the proportion of nonvoters was impressive, particularly in the south, where it exceeded 35 percent of the voter cards distributed. Not all of these took their cue from the CUT, Juvento, and MPT (Mouvement Populaire Togolais), but they give some idea of how truly representative the opposition was in comparison with previous elections. The “abstention constant” was calculated at 15 percent;

49. Directorate note cited in n. 47 above, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 2182/3.

50. Togo Legislative Assembly, 1st Legislature, *Débats*, 18 Sept. 1956.

51. *Ibid.*, 14 Aug. 1956.

52. *Ibid.*, 13 Feb. 1957.

53. Edmond Luce, *Le référendum au Togo (28 Octobre 1956)* (Paris, 1958), and Périer de Féral, “Rapport sur le référendum du 28 octobre 1956” (Lomé, 9 Nov. 1956).

Périer de Féral estimated it was 12.5 percent. In reality it was much higher, for, as the French commissioner himself admitted, it should have included those who favored maintaining the trusteeship regime and therefore opposed the statute proposed by France: slightly more than 6.6 percent of the votes cast, or 5 percent of the cards distributed. Finally, and above all, the number of registered voters was less than the actual electoral body, and varied greatly from region to region. Thus, at Lomé registrations represented less than one-fourth of the population, whereas they had generally exceeded 40 percent elsewhere. The opposition "fiefs" were especially affected, so much so that de Féral admitted that one could "wonder whether such great differences result from discriminatory political action or from other causes."⁵⁴ Perhaps the rectifications demanded by the CUT and MPT would not have altered the general trend of the poll, as de Féral believed; nevertheless, the manipulations to which they seem to have given rise increased the bias of international opinion against France.

The MPT, it is true, had organized the referendum without taking into account the United Nations, whose divisions now reflected not only East-West cleavages but also the rise of the Afro-Asian group particularly unfavorable to French policy at the end of 1956.⁵⁵ Moreover, after the referendum France had reason to fear a reversal by the United States, whose delegate on the Trusteeship Council, Mason Sears, was reputed to be anti-colonialist and unconvinced by the autonomy solution. In January the debates in the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee were difficult, in spite of the dispatch of a joint Franco-Togolese delegation including the president of the Legislative Assembly, Robert Ajavon, Togo's finance minister, Apédo Amah, Gaston Defferre, and even Félix Houphouët-Boigny, minister delegate of the prime minister's office in Paris. The latter "made a certain impression" but was confronted by "positions systematically decided in advance," especially that of India as represented by Krishna Menon.⁵⁶ The French government therefore refrained from requesting termination of trusteeship because of the autonomy stature; on the other hand it received one compensation: a quasi-recognition of its reforms, thanks to the sending of a fourth visiting mission charged with examining the implementation of the new statute. This was an important surcease. The mission's visit took place during May and June 1957 and was the occasion for incidents of bloodshed in the northern part of the country. These, however, did not indicate a provocative disposition, and the

54. Périer de Féral, report cited in n. 53 above.

55. For the pressure of an "often demagogic" anti-colonialism against France at the U.N., see Alfred Grosser, *La IV^e République et sa politique extérieure* (Paris, 1967), pp. 373-77.

56. *Marchés tropicaux et Méditerranéens* (formerly *Marchés coloniaux*), 5 and 12 Jan. 1957, "La question du Togo à l'O.N.U."

mission's report, while not considering that the time had come to lift the U.N.'s trusteeship, acknowledged that the statute nevertheless constituted "a very important step in that direction."

Improvement of relations with the United Nations concerning Togo were also aided by the continuing process of transferring power, so that France was able to enter the November 1957 debates under better conditions. The Franco-Togolese delegation, Dr. Ajavon and the socialist minister for Overseas France, jointly presented a timetable calling for the election of a new Legislative Assembly by universal suffrage, the transfer of residual powers except diplomacy, external defense, and currency, and, finally, the end of trusteeship in 1958. The opposition retorted with a passionate plea before the Fourth Committee; Sylvanius Olympio condemned the "arbitrary" statute; the attorney Santos, speaking for Juvento, denounced France's "ventriloquist policy" by use of the constitutional law. Nevertheless, the French government obtained passage of a resolution that it considered a "relatively satisfactory" compromise; the United Nations imposed the supervision of the coming elections by a committee elected from among its members, but it no longer questioned Togo's institutions. In Paris this was even seen as the prelude to recognition of the French Union because, "for the first time, a majority of the United Nations acknowledg[ed] autonomy as one normal end of the trusteeship regime, which most of the delegations had heretofore refused to admit."⁵⁷

In this there were many illusions. In the subtle play among the three levels—local, metropolitan, and international—the power of decision was gravitating increasingly to the first. In 1957 each of the parties in Togo was preparing for the final step to independence. As for the victors of the preceding year, they posed as champions of a progressive and peaceful handover of sovereignty, in order to represent their opponents as irresponsible and proponents of direct confrontation. "Gentlemen," explained Dr. Ajavon on 6 June 1957 before the Legislative Assembly and the members of the visiting mission, "for a dependent country there are two ways to gain independence: one brutal, bloody, and destructive, the other peaceful, based on patient negotiation, goodwill, and mutual understanding. We have preferred the latter, and no one could reproach us for it."⁵⁸ At a time when the Algerian conflict was rotting in violence, these words were clear. The Ghana contagion was feared more than ever, and the prime minister endeavored to demonstrate the superiority of his country's institutions. "Ghana is a constitutional monarchy," Grunitzky pointed out, "Togo an autonomous Republic. . . . In Ghana, as in

57. Political synthesis, Nov. 1957, ANSOM, Aff. Pol. 3309/2.

58. Legislative Assembly, 1st Legislature, 6 Jun. 1957.

Togo, laws are made by an assembly, called national in Ghana, legislative in Togo. . . . With its five million inhabitants Ghana has a deputy for each 48,000 inhabitants, whereas in Togo the proportion is a deputy for each 40,000." Finally, "the proclamation of the Togolese Republic safeguards the identity and territorial integrity of our country, while the creation of Ghana has the effect of linking the destiny of British Togo to a country of which it is only a minority component. . . ."59

But the tone of the opposition was rising. Demonstrations for independence took place, for example, during Gaston Defferre's visit on 21 September 1956, and when the U.N. visiting mission passed through Lomé on 31 May 1957. In France, student members of the Young Togo Association carried the Fédération des Etudiants d'Afrique Noire (in France) (FEANF) along in a unanimous vote, condemning France's policy in Togo and Cameroon in December 1956. Polemics intensified on the spot; popular songs demanded "out with the Progressives, out with the French."60 At the end of 1957 the opposition press and *Negréta* denounced PTP elements and "their European masters."61 It was thus in an atmosphere of "political tension . . . and mutual suspicion" that the election campaign began, and over it weighed the threat of a general strike.

The 1958 elections nevertheless took place in relative calm, a success for the United Nations, which had sent a strong delegation of observers under the direction of an elected commissioner, the Haitian representative Max Dorsinville. The voluminous report he submitted details the meticulous care taken to organize operations so that the protests of 1956 over registration and abuses of authority would not be repeated. It gives us also an understanding of the population's political awareness, shown by "the determination of thousands of Togolese man and women to be inscribed on the voter lists," over which Dorsinville did not conceal his admiration and astonishment. Women especially, "clearly cognizant and organized in Lomé," appeared to him determined to strengthen their role in the country's civic life. This maturity was confirmed in the conduct of the operations; thanks to the U.N. mission's mediation, the opposition observed a relative truce, the government agreed to cooperate, and "there was sufficient freedom in Togo from February to April 1958 to permit the opposition parties to win a crushing victory, contrary to the prognostications of most prophets."62

59. Ibid.

60. Ginette Kponton, *La décolonisation au Togo (1940-1960)*, thesis, Aix en Provence, 1977, 2 vols.

61. *Negréta*, 3 Dec. 1957, quoted in Kponton, *La décolonisation*, p. 269.

62. Max Dorsinville, Report to the Trusteeship Council of the U.N. on 27 Apr. 1958 elections in Togo, typed document, p. 119.

A victory by the pro-governments had been anticipated on all sides. The opposite occurred. Altogether, the opposition won twenty-nine seats out of forty-six, with 61.5 percent of the votes cast, whereas the UCPN received only 18 percent, the PTP 13 percent, and independents approximately 7 percent. During the night of 27-28 April, Dorsinville recounts, when it was determined that half the seats had been carried by the opposition, the high commissioner announced that he would call upon the leader of the victorious party, Sylvanius Olympio, who was then involved in a court prosecution and was unable to appear. Dorsinville acted as go-between, and Olympio was installed by the new assembly on 16 May after popular demonstrations of joy—mixed with acts of rancor against the “progressives”—in the name of *Ablodé*.

A few comments should be made on this subject. First, the turnover of power from the Grunitzky government to the Olympio government took place with the strictest legality and with France's approval. This was not a result of the change of regime in France, because it occurred after the Togo elections. In other words, the administering power was already deeply engaged in a process of transition to an independence it had already agreed to when General de Gaulle returned to office. There was no basic change of its conduct after May 1958; moreover, Paris left the same high commissioner, Georges Spénale, in place to negotiate the final steps toward the total sovereignty of Togo.

Second, the defeat of the pro-government wing may, certainly, be attributed in part to the impossibility of collusion between the French administration and its friends. It was due also to the over-confidence of the “progressives” in victory over those whom Prime Minister Grunitzky had called “a handful of agitators” in May 1957.⁶³ Above all, it was the rapid erosion of men in power accused of financial mismanagement and of becoming wealthy by the persistence of a state of dependency. It is quite possible that the French authorities observed this decline in the government's popularity and took it into account.

In the third place, the coming to power of the nationalists did not bring with it an upheaval in relations with France. “In an independent Togo, France will be the most favored nation, and my government will endeavour to improve the opportunities for real co-operation between the two countries,” declared Sylvanius Olympio on 16 May 1958 in his inauguration address.⁶⁴ Thus there was simply the acceleration of a process already embarked upon. In September the two governments entered into negotiations “to decide jointly . . . the date when independence will be proclaimed”; they pro-

63. *Le Togo républicain*, 15 May 1957, cited in Kponton, *La décolonisation*, p. 271.

64. Togo Legislative Assembly, 2d Legislature, *Débats*, 16 May 1958.

ceeded in such an atmosphere of understanding that the Togolese themselves were surprised, as Sylvanius Olympio admitted to the Assembly: "We began the negotiations with little hope of arriving at concrete results so soon. The Minister of Overseas France, M. Cornut-Gentile at the time, quickly put us at ease during the preliminary discussions, and gave us an unexpected confidence. . . ." ⁶⁵ Among interlocutors who "held nothing back" it was then easy to reach agreement on a period of "one or two years to put the necessary institutions in place" and request abrogation of the trusteeship agreement. ⁶⁶ In March 1959 the completion of this development was set for the following year. Togo was thus the first of the French-speaking territories to see its independence recognized without a rupture, as in Guinea, or without passing through the Community stage. In May 1960 Togo confirmed by an exchange of letters the preexisting agreements concluded in February 1958 respecting foreign representation, defense, and currency, and in 1961 entered the Cooperation system.

Finally, one may note that the Lomé government sought to serve as a role model and, at the same time, to preserve the integrity of its territorial heritage. "We must recognize that beyond Togo it is the future of all Africa that is at stake," one victor in the May 1958 elections exclaimed, without exaggeration. "Upon our success in managing the affairs of this country will depend the acceleration of the process of liberating our comrades, our African compatriots, who expect much from us." ⁶⁷ Furthermore, in the minds of the new rulers emancipation from the ties of economic dependence should be the corollary of political sovereignty. Sylvanius Olympio believed this could be achieved by international aid and the virtues of self-help. However, his government was immediately confronted with difficulties that could hardly be overcome in this way. The budget had to be severely restricted, taxes raised, and appeal again made to France for aid. Already in 1959 the disillusionments of independence appeared aggravated by the return of Togolese driven out by Ivory Coast xenophobia. Unity among the nationalists was threatened; it exploded in May with the resignation of Santos, the Juvento leader. The regime then had to deal with two oppositions: the Right, unified but losing momentum, and the Left, which had been radical and pugnacious even before independence. The regime was consequently led to break its promises of democracy by arresting its opponents and restricting liberties, thus beginning its relapse into presidential and single-party rule.

This hardening line may also have been encouraged by the necessity to strengthen the country's unity in the face of a rebirth of Ghanaian ambitions.

65. *Ibid.*, 27 Oct. 1958.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*, 16 May 1958.

In May 1958 Nkrumah awakened fears of annexation in a speech delivered at Ho, in which he denounced the problems arising from the "artificial frontier" between the two countries. In September vexatious measures against Ewes in Ghana suspected of sympathies with the Lomé government sustained the tension. Also, in December 1959, Sylvanius Olympio took advantage of U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld's visit to Lomé to reiterate the determination of "the entire Togolese people" never to accept integration of Togo into the state of Ghana. But Ewe irredentism was to remain a source of discord between the two successor states.

A first observation is that during the "transfer of power" process the contending parties always avoided the kind of violent force that occurred in the Ivory Coast or Cameroon, even at the time of the lively conflicts between the French administration and the nationalists between 1951 and 1954. Was this because the masses did not feel sufficiently mobilized by the slogans and because the country was too heterogeneous to respond to them? In part, certainly. But the popularity of the Ewe cause throughout the southern part of the country was at first unquestionable, and political life rapidly penetrated the north, notwithstanding the chiefs' sway over their subordinates. Moreover, the violent troubles witnessed in other territories were not necessarily the acts of better mobilized and less heterogeneous masses.

Was it because the principal Togolese leaders belonged to the same social group—the lower national bourgeoisie—divided more by cultural and political differences of the English and French colonizations, by family quarrels, and personal rivalries than by class conflict and incompatible ideologies? One is tempted to ascribe some truth to this hypothesis. At no time did Sylvanius Olympio and his chief collaborators invoke any kind of socialist model, and once he was in power Olympio's appeal to self-help was more a reaction of national pride than a socialist choice.

Finally, was it because the French administration was more understanding and flexible in Togo than elsewhere? At first glance this was not so. The policy of repression, to repeat the CUT's accusations, pursued by governors Digo and Péchoux, did indeed attempt to stifle nationalist demands. If the administration's conduct did in fact relax, it did so gradually and in step with the growing realization that adaptations were required in the French Union. But it is also true that Togo seemed to be a favored proving ground for the progressive transfer of power. From this point of view, France adapted itself very well to the change of governing teams in Togo.

The most striking fact in this evolution, however, is the early and sustained intervention by international opinion in Togo's affairs. Not that this interven-

tion exhibited any special competence or unity of views in the United Nations, but it did demonstrate the extreme skill, perseverance, and adaptability of the CUT leaders. They knew remarkably well how to use the international weapon, even though the administering powers, on their side, were able to organize a good defense. Thus, the latter succeeded in drawing the teeth of the demand for Ewe reunification; the former, in the end, with U.N. assistance made their adversaries submit to the demand for independence.

In view of the atypical and exemplary nature of this unruffled voyage to independence, one may wonder about Togo's subsequent fate. Three years after obtaining international sovereignty, the country experienced the first of black Africa's praetorian coups d'état, and since 1967 it has had the oldest of the continent's military regimes.⁶⁸ A pilot nation, twice victim of a putsch carried out by half-pay soldiers?⁶⁹ A neocolonialist government, prey to imperialist rivalries but also to its own unpopularity?⁷⁰ These assessments are not mutually exclusive and help to cast light on events after 1960; but they are not enough.

Pilot nation? Perhaps, in the eyes of the tutelary power, which thought it was making Togo a model of pragmatic, moderate evolution, and making its experiment an apprenticeship in French-style democracy. Later developments, however, almost immediately belied this project, if indeed there was really a project consistently pursued. From the first days of independence one could observe the failure of hope for national unity and the creation of a democratic state. Liberties were suppressed; opposition figures were prosecuted; power was seized by a small clique of Brazilian and Mina descent allied with Olympio. In 1963 the return of Nicolas Grunitzky, and the promulgation of a constitution by which the chief of state office was shared with Antoine Méatchi, might have reinstituted a democratic process as well as restoring a necessary equilibrium with the north. In vain. The failure to achieve integration of the nation and the state was reflected in particularisms and growing tensions that led to a new military intervention.

Neocolonialist government? Obviously. What black-African government of the time, except for Ghana and Guinea, could not have been so called? But Togo was not the victim of imperialist intrigues. Its choice of a pro-West course and its lack of major strategic importance, direct or indirect, sheltered it from that. It is true that Sylvanius Olympio, whose sympathies were Anglo-American, met with Kennedy and sought to disengage his country

68. But the adjective *military* does not adequately characterize African governments dominated by the army; one cannot compare Eyadéma's Togo with Amin Dada's Uganda.

69. Robert Cornevin, *Le Togo, nation pilote* (Paris, 1963).

70. Yves Benot, *Idéologies des indépendances africaines* (Paris), p. 156 n. 39.

from French influence by favoring English companies and embarking on a policy of draconian austerity. Civil servants, their salaries withheld, planters, whose earnings were made taxable, nanas, obliged to travel across the UAC for their textile trade, the north, deprived of FIDES investments: all had reason to long for times past. Even the Catholics felt persecuted.⁷¹ By contrast, France's preference for Grunitzky was obvious, and it was quite natural for her to outfit his dissident soldiers after 1963.⁷² Nevertheless, the first Togolese government died of pervasive unpopularity.

Putsches by half-pay soldiers? Certainly, for they were the work of soldiers discharged from the French army and the last colonial wars.⁷³ Their coup d'état of 13 January 1963 was nothing less than a paradox in this country without a military tradition, since the mandatory regime had forbidden recruitment. The "army" was a tiny little group, and the "uprising" that toppled Olympio was, after all, simply a mutiny by thirty-odd soldiers trained by noncommissioned officers. An epiphenomenon of the prevailing exasperation, the soldiers' protest, corporate and tribal in nature,⁷⁴ evolved into a major crisis because of the indifference or hostility into which the regime had sunk. Had it not been for the solidarity with which the other African heads of state reacted, uneasy at this precedent, the event would have been of a purely fortuitous character.⁷⁵

The incompetence and debility of the state after 1963, however, demonstrated what strength the praetorians possessed; little inclined at first to take power, they were led almost in spite of themselves to assume it. Symptomatically, in 1963 they stood aside in favor of the civilians; they demonstrated their legalism in November 1966 when Olympio's friends attempted to resume power; and again, in October 1967, when the army proposed to

71. On the conjunction of dissatisfactions, see Cornevin, *Le Togo, nation pilote*, pp. 149–50, and *L'Année africaine*, 1963.

72. Grunitzky compensated the soldiers by buying armored cars and airplanes and by granting them promotions. The army thereby acquired undeniable prestige among the people.

73. A sergeant-major in the French Army, demobilized in 1962, Etienne Eyadéma had enlisted in 1953 and participated in the wars in Indochina and Algeria. He had declined nomination to the Officers' School at Frejus.

74. Eighty percent of the soldiers were natives of the north; those demobilized from the French Army asked in vain of Sylvanus Olympio for integration into the Togolese Army, then consisting of one company. On these events, see Cornevin, *Le Togo, nation pilote*, and Jean-François Paganel, *Les coups d'état militaires en Afrique noire* (Paris, 1984), pp. 167–68.

75. It is true that the events of Jan. 1963 constituted a precedent and were a bad example in the eyes of the new African states' leaders. At the founding conference of the OAU in May, Nigeria and Guinea opposed Togo's participation, Guinea expressing indignation that those who had risen to power by murder should be seated. See Nguyen Van Chien, *Les politiques d'unité africaine*, thesis, Paris V, 1974, p. 220.

return to its barracks, it was the public that voted for it, against the previous civilian government.

The latter had in fact perished from unpopularity. The causes, however, were not the same as three years before. This time it was not authoritarianism, exactions, and abuse of power that exhausted the country's patience but personal and regional rivalries that shattered the state.⁷⁶ The modernized army then made up its mind and, symbolically, chose the anniversary date of 13 January 1976 to put an end to the civilian experiment. Political parties were abolished, and power was rapidly assumed by Colonel Eyadéma as chief of a state resting on the single party founded in November 1969. To conclude that democracy had suffered defeat would be mistaken because it had never been achieved, whereas the new regime put in its place a subtle dose of regionalism in the distribution of executive power.

76. Cf. J. C. Froelich in *L'Afrique et l'Asie* (1968): 64–72, and "Togo 1969" in *C.R. Académie des Sciences d'Outre Mer* (1969): 331–47.

13. *Radical Nationalism in French Africa: The Case of Cameroon*

RICHARD JOSEPH

The unique experiences of Cameroon cannot be overlooked if we wish to explain how France came to transfer sovereignty to its African territories despite the absence of any commitment to do so until the very end of the 1950s. Upon reading contributions to *Decolonization in Africa*, for example, I was struck by how little an awareness of these developments had been incorporated into general interpretations of the decolonization era in French Africa.¹

In the introduction to my 1977 study, I expressed the hope that the book would provide, *inter alia*, a counterbalance to the over emphasis on what was called "the Léopold Senghor–Houphouët-Boigny tradition of the anti-colonial struggle in former French Africa."² Without denying the importance of these leaders and the one other politician usually presented as the outsider in this process, Sékou Touré, it is necessary that we do not circumscribe the range of ideas and policies deserving scholarly attention to only those that proved "victorious" in the struggle to inherit power from the French. Yves Person, for example, adds to his frequent references to the "brilliant mind" of

1. Those of my own works from which excerpts will be taken are: "Ruben Um Nyobé and the 'Kamerun' Rebellion," *African Affairs* 73, 293 (Oct. 1974); "Settlers, Strikers and *Sans-Travail*: The Douala Riots of September 1945," *Journal of African History* 15, 4 (1974); "The German Question in French Cameroun, 1919–1939," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17, 1 (Jan. 1975); "National Politics in Postwar Cameroon: The Difficult Birth of the UPC," *Journal of African Studies* 2, 2 (Summer 1975); and *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun: Social Origins of the UPC Rebellion* (Oxford, 1977), which is also available in French as *Le mouvement nationaliste au Cameroun* (Paris, 1986), and in a paperback edition (Trenton, N.J., 1988).

2. Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun*, p. 4.

the “brilliant poet” Senghor the claim that, in the face of the “chaos of desires and aspirations” of colonial policy embodied in the 1946 constitution of the French Fourth Republic, “no clear political principle emerged . . . except perhaps in Senegal.”³ Such a statement will stand contradicted by much of this chapter, as well as others that could be written about developments in other French colonies such as Togo and Niger. Person follows the well-trodden path of explaining the sudden granting of independence to French territories in 1960: Guinea was abruptly cut loose in punishment for voting no in the 1958 referendum, and Houphouët-Boigny decided to declare independence in a state of pique because Mali was allowed to do so while retaining membership in the French Union. Houphouët’s maneuvers against the Mali federation helped set off the “chain reaction” of other decolonizing actions.⁴

In contrast to the confused situation in French Africa after de Gaulle returned to power in 1958, according to Person, “the rest of Africa was marching at an impressive pace toward liberation. Several English-speaking states, including great Nigeria nearby, acceded to it in 1960, as well as the Belgian Congo . . . French-speaking Cameroon would soon follow.”⁵ In fact, Cameroon’s independence *preceded*, not followed, that of all these countries Person mentions. The independence of French Cameroon on 1 January 1960 took place ten months before that of “great Nigeria.” In May 1957 a “Cameroon State under Autonomy,” in which France still exercised considerable powers, was brought into being, and a year later the Cameroon Assembly passed a motion modifying this statute and declaring the country’s right to opt for independence. These actions were not resisted by France, for reasons that I shall elaborate on, and full internal autonomy took effect in January 1959, one year before the granting of independence.

One of the points made in all major studies of post-1945 Cameroon is that the French refused to recognize this trust territory of the United Nations as having a different political future from that of its other colonies in Africa.⁶ In most respects, the territory of Cameroon was governed in a manner similar to that of France’s other territories, and thus the challenge that Cameroon made to French policies was not hermetically sealed off from what was taking place

3. Yves Person, “French West Africa and Decolonization,” in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization 1940–1960* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 147. In an article in the same volume with numerous interesting insights, Tony Smith similarly stays with the Houphouët-Senghor-Touré schema: “Patterns in the Transfer of Power: A Comparative Study of French and British Decolonization,” pp. 87–116.

4. Person, “French West Africa and Decolonization,” pp. 168–69.

5. Ibid.

6. The pioneering work in this area is David E. Gardinier, *Cameroon: The United Nations Challenge to French Policy* (London, 1963).

in the rest of West Africa.⁷ The Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) was, from its inception, a *section* of the interterritorial party of French West Africa, the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA). Ruben Um Nyobé, the first secretary-general and chief organizer of the UPC, was one of the four RDA vice presidents before his party was formed in Cameroon in April 1948. Finally, the statement by Person that "the liberation of French West Africa, in fact, was accomplished without armed struggle" is only accurate if we could sustain the rather difficult claim that this liberation occurred in complete isolation from the armed struggle that was launched in Cameroon in December 1956, eventually requiring the intervention of metropolitan French troops and reaching its highest level of conflict during the period of the transfer of power to the Ahmadou Ahidjo government after 1958.⁸

While reviewing here the major features of the struggle for self-rule in Cameroon, I hope to demonstrate that a full appreciation of what transpired in this country leads to a broader and more complex view of how France retained considerable involvement and influence in its former African territories. Moreover, the Cameroon experience should be a central and not peripheral part of accounts of why France seemed to abandon so abruptly its resistance to self-government and independence as legitimate goals for its African territories, a policy that had stood for over a decade since enunciated at the Brazzaville Conference of colonial administrators in 1944.

In a memorandum signed on 12 September 1945 by the Duala leaders gathered together in their traditional assembly, the Ngondo, strong opposition was expressed to the election of Cameroonians to the French Constituent Assembly.⁹ Although the French deftly undermined this brewing revolt by putting up the Duala chieftain, Prince Douala Manga Bell, as a candidate for the Constituent Assembly, the anti-assimilationist sentiments expressed in the Duala's 1945 manifesto were kept alive by the continuing search for a more Cameroon-oriented political organization.

Cameroonians who had served in the French armed forces during World War II provided, as elsewhere in colonial Africa, great impetus to nationalist politics after their repatriation. The association formed by ex-servicemen in Cameroon assumed the form and name of a pan-Negro organization based in

7. Developments in France's other African trust territory, Togo, also add to many of the arguments made here, although they will not be discussed in this chapter.

8. Person, "French West Africa and Decolonization," p. 170.

9. Copies of this memorandum are in dossier APA 10209/3 (APA refers to files in the Archives Nationales du Cameroun, Yaoundé). For a discussion of its impact by one of its authors, see Jacques Kuoh-Moukouri, *Doigts noirs: je fus écrivain-interprète au Cameroun* (Montreal, 1963), p. 106.

Paris, the Front Intercolonial (FI). On 6 July 1945 a Cameroon *section* of the FI was constituted among Cameroonian soldiers in the French Army. Here is how the group's founder, James Eboumbou, explained it to the High Commissioner: "We have been working within this movement ever since our stay in the *métropole*, and our *section* was formed on July 6, 1945 at Saintes (Charentes Maritime) in accordance with certain decisions made at the imperial Conference at Brazzaville, granting the right of assembly and even the extension of political participation to the overseas territories."¹⁰

The date for the establishment of the Cameroon branch in the territory is variously given as 18 December 1945 and 8 July 1946. In response to inquiries from the French authorities, the military command reported that Eboumbou and the other servicemen were being repatriated because of their disloyalty, theft of documents, and subversive propaganda. During the next two years, however, these men were to prove themselves to be political activists and not just undisciplined ex-soldiers. A word must be said about the FI itself. Throughout the interwar period there existed a wide range of nationalist groups among French colonial subjects and citizens in Paris. The FI was formed on 21 January 1945 under the leadership of a Guadeloupean lawyer, Raymond Sylvestre Alcandre, and its Executive Committee was largely made up of other West Indians. Alcandre's father, Jules Alcandre, had been active in moderate political and cultural groups during the 1920s and had founded and published the newspaper *Europe-Colonies*. The views of his son two decades later were far more radical and nationalist. His organization's name echoed that of the Union Intercoloniale, established by another Guadeloupean, Max Bloncourt, during the early 1920s, which grouped together such other radical nationalists as Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh) and the Madagascan Jean Ralaimongo.¹¹ One of the aims of these Paris-based colonial nationalists was to establish direct links with anti-colonial groups in the territories. It was therefore an accomplishment for the FI to have brought the Cameroonian ex-servicemen under its banner.

What further alarmed the authorities is that the *secrétaire-adjoint* of the FI in Paris was none other than Vincent Ganty, a Guyanese who had acted as an intermediary for the Duala people in their political protests to the League of Nations during the 1930s.¹² In Cameroon, although other local political figures were often invited to address FI meetings, the *bureau* of this group consisted of only five ex-servicemen. With a few exceptions, the leaders were

10. APA 10188, CA James Eboumbou to high commissioner of Cameroon, 8 Jul. 1946.

11. See J. S. Spiegler, "Aspects of Nationalist Thought among French-Speaking West Africans, 1921-1939," Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1968, pp. 81-111.

12. See Adalbert Owona, "A l'aube du nationalisme camerounais: la curieuse figure de Vincent Ganty," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 204, 3 (1969): 199-235.

all government employees (many with the railways) and could be characterized as belonging to the lower-middle class of subordinate clerical workers and skilled laborers. From the outset, the international and pan-Negro *Weltanschauung* of the Paris group was adopted by the local FI:

To unite French colonials of the *métropole* and overseas with the aim of improving their social, intellectual, political and economic situation. To establish relations with the free countries and the foreign minorities of the black race in order to study on an international basis the problems which affect them and to achieve solutions to these problems.¹³

At a meeting in Douala on 25 January 1947, Eboumbou spoke of the need for Cameroonians to secure their full rights by any means necessary. He also strongly criticized the deputy, Douala Manga Bell, for not doing anything for his electors, and cited favorably the growing movement for autonomy elsewhere in the colonial world and especially in French West Africa.¹⁴ The following month, after Manga Bell had given a talk, he was barraged with hostile questions from Joseph Etoundi and Jean Reily, active members of the FI, regarding the intended duration of French trusteeship over Cameroon, on the subject of how the rights of Cameroonians compared with those accorded French citizens, and on the deputy's views concerning the discriminatory treatment of Africans in the territory.¹⁵ There was a discernible populist theme in the views expressed by FI leaders, for example, in their indignation over the favoritism shown by the administration toward the collaborating indigenous elites, and in their chastising of Cameroonian intellectuals—such as Charles Okala—who appeared to abandon their nationalist beliefs the moment they obtained a parliamentary seat.

Recognizing that the FI was becoming increasingly active in voicing the protests of diverse sectors of the general population, the French sought to temper its militancy by granting ex-servicemen in June 1947 certain privileges in the procuring of raw materials and imported goods.¹⁶ By the end of December, the administration had compiled a list of the issues that the FI was planning to put before the minister for Overseas France: the partial resumption in the territory of the *indigénat*; the mistreatment of Cameroonians by whites and especially the practice of racial discrimination; the involvement of priests and missionaries in politics; the need for a purge of the *vieux coloniaux*;

13. A full copy of the group's objectives is in APA 10188, CA.

14. APA 10182/B, CA, Rapport hebdomadaire de la Sûreté Générale, 25 Jan.–1 Feb. 1947. These weekly reports of the security police in the Cameroon National Archives will hereafter be cited as Rapports de Sûreté.

15. Ibid., 23 Feb.–1 Mar. 1947.

16. Ibid., 14–21 June 1947.

and the independence of the local government from the *métropole*.¹⁷ This final point refers to the practice of the local administration of deciding which of the metropolitan laws and decrees it would implement in the territory and which of them it would tacitly overlook, a problem that was to persist throughout the postwar period. In brief, the ex-servicemen in Cameroon did more than contribute to the new political consciousness awakened by the war: they acted as transmitters of the pan-African and pan-Negro tradition—a function usually performed by the more middle-class elite—and they brought to the politics of postwar Cameroon a populist distrust of the middle-class politician who arouses national sentiments in pursuit of his own personal interests.

Trade unionism also laid the groundwork for the emergence of radical nationalism in Cameroon. Trade union activists in the Union des Syndicats Confédérés du Cameroun (USCC) provided the link between the Marxist study groups, organized by French Communists among Cameroonian intellectuals toward the end of World War II, and the subsequent political mobilizing of laborers in the southern plantations and urban centers. The trade-union movement was also important in facilitating the shift from a Duala to a more national anti-colonial movement. Thus, among the Executive Committee of the USCC, the people of the center were represented by James Eboumbou (also of the FI), the Duala maintained some influence with Moumé-Etia and Ebenezer Ekwalla, the south-center Bulu people had Charles Assale, and the increasingly politically important Bassa people in the immediate hinterland of Douala provided the future nationalist and trade-union leaders of the country with Ruben Um Nyobé and Jacques N'Gom. The USCC was organized on a confederal basis and therefore included a wide range of individual unions. As would be expected, there were important trade unions formed among civil servants and railway workers. In addition, however, such groups as the domestic workers were also organized into unions, with the most surprising being the Syndicat de Police et de la Sûreté.

Confronted as it was with so insistent a trade-union movement, the French tried but never succeeded in dividing the ranks (that is, prior to the brutal repression of the UPC in 1955). The first attempt to set up a rival to the USCC came with the split in the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) in Paris at the end of 1947 and the creation of the Socialist-allied CGT-Force Ouvrière (CGT-FO). The person the French chose to carry the banner of this new metropolitan union in the territory was Alphonse Tonye, the second-in-command in the trade union of the police and security services.¹⁸ Tonye was promised the full support of the administration, financial and otherwise. He

17. Ibid., 27 Dec. 1947–3 Jan. 1948.

18. Rapports de Sûreté, 17–24 Apr. 1948.

could not, however, fight off the criticism of Cameroonian trade unions and of French CGT visitors to the territory who accused him of being a sellout and of seeking to introduce a new division into the Cameroon working class.¹⁹

FRENCH LIBERAL COLONIALISM

Apart from the rare example of Governor Latrille in the Ivory Coast between 1944 and early 1947, who actively facilitated the establishment of the *Syndicat Africain Agricole* and the *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire*, the tendency of French colonial governors after World War II—even the supposedly liberal and progressive ones—was deliberately to stymie the growth of movements that encouraged “separatist” or “autonomist” sentiments among the population. In short, African subjects were allowed to be nationalist so long as the nation in question was that of “Greater France.” A Cameroonian or Guinean or Nigerian nationalist was, by definition, anti-French and hence a hostile subversive element. Most commentators on the post-World War II nationalist period in former French Africa usually emphasize the limited and late development of pro-independence movements in that part of sub-Saharan Africa. There is clearly room for studies of the ways in which such movements, when they did emerge, were deliberately *prevented* from becoming fully viable.

In the case of Cameroon, the notion that French colonial rule in the territory should end, and Cameroon be placed under direct international trusteeship, took hold among the Duala immediately after the war and then spread progressively among the peoples inland.²⁰ Cameroonian elites felt doubly bitter against the French: first, because they felt France had done little for the country and its people during the previous quarter-century; and, second, because many of them had fought with and contributed toward helping France during the war, only to see themselves remain in the same subordinate position. These points were made in closed meetings, and sometimes openly, during discussions that preceded the composition of the Duala manifesto of September 1945.²¹ From this standpoint, it is interesting to note the exact ideas expressed by the Duala in 1945 being reiterated three years later by Um Nyobé while the UPC was being launched: “After the great offensive against pan-Germanism, no black man, regardless of his position, can accept oppression in any form whatsoever. When our brothers voluntarily enlisted, they had clearly in mind the right to liberty and independence. You can

19. *Ibid.*, 24 Apr.–1 May 1948.

20. APA 10209/3, CA, Agitations et Troubles Douala, 1945; and *Rapports de Sûreté*, 20 Nov.–6 Dec. 1946.

21. APA 10209/3, CA, Agitations et Troubles Douala, 1945.

therefore understand why these people, after having endured so much suffering, can no longer accept assimilation."²²

Much to the contrary, the political assimilation of the African populations was looked upon by the French as granting liberty and a higher form of independence. Moreover, the French were quite prepared to impose their definition of liberty and independence by force, a fact which did not escape the Cameroonians: "Since the point of view of the strongest is always best, and the French are the strongest, we must remain silent."²³ The man sent out to achieve this end in Cameroon, after the violent series of conflicts between European settlers and African rioters in September 1945, was the very model of French colonial liberalism, Governor (and later Governor-General) Robert Delavignette. Despite the political and trade-union turmoil throughout his stay, Delavignette succeeded in keeping a lid on the situation until his departure in February 1947. At one point he admitted that the Cameroonian elite was fifty years ahead in its political thinking.²⁴ Nevertheless, on this question Delavignette acted like most colonial governors of his time, that is, ensuring that the political goals of this elite remained a matter for the very distant future. Thus, local administrators were in no doubt that their responsibility during Delavignette's governorship was to act vigorously against any Cameroonian who stepped out of line; on any occasion when anti-French sentiments were reportedly made by an African, even in the most anodyne circumstances, Delavignette immediately ordered special surveillance and the threat of punishment.²⁵

The immediate postwar years in Cameroon are of considerable importance in explaining the course of the nationalist struggle before the country's independence in 1960, which, in J. Suret-Canale's words, "was greeted as a victory even by those who had neither desired nor sought it."²⁶ At a Congress of Jeucafra (Jeunesse Camerounaise Française) in 1945, the group's name was changed to Unicafra (Union Camerounaise Française), and it called for the suppression of the *indigénat*, the transfer of justice to magistrates, the creation of a territorial assembly with legislative powers and elected regional councils, and the Africanization of the administration. This party never be-

22. APA 11167, CA, Um Nyobé to Félix Moumié, 8 June 1948.

23. APA 10209/3, CA, Cited in Police Agent Report, Douala, 14 Sept. 1945.

24. Robert Delavignette, "A Letter from French Cameroun," *African Affairs* 46, 184 (July 1947): 153.

25. APA 10175, CA, Charles Okala to high commissioner, 20 Oct. 1946, and Report of Interrogation of Isaac Eyoun by Commissioner of Police, Georges Hochapfel, 6 Sept. 1946.

26. Jean Suret-Canale, "From Colonization to Independence in French Tropical Africa: The Economic Background," in *The Transfer of Power in Africa*, p. 475.

came fully functional for a number of reasons, and at its congress during March and April 1947 it gave way to the Rassemblement Camerounais (Racam), an organization significantly without the word *français* in the title. The proof of Delavignette's assertion that the Cameroonian elite was extremely advanced in its political thinking is demonstrated by the constitution of this body, entitled "*Charte des Populations Autochtones du Cameroun*." In the words of one of its leading members, the Racam "was a state within a state . . . we set it up in such a way as to be able immediately to form a Cameroonian government . . . everyone was in it, even the chiefs from North Cameroon and the Center."²⁷

Here again, attention can be drawn to the lack of an adequate awareness by students of French Africa of the nature, pace, and scope of political developments in Cameroon after 1945. Tony Smith, for example, argues that "immediately after World War II, African nationalism in the French territories found its most advanced expression in Senegal and the Ivory Coast."²⁸ Cameroonian nationalists would strongly challenge such a statement. For them, the Racam reflected their conviction of their ability to "direct our own affairs" and their being "in advance of the other peoples of francophone Africa."²⁹ Unlike the manifestos of most emergent nationalist parties, the Racam constitution calls to mind the Charter of a Provisional Government and Constituent Assembly that would give birth in time to a Cameroon nation and republic. It provided for an assembly in which seats were apportioned to the various regions. All existing "associations with a political character" were declared "null and void," and the Provisional Bureau of the Racam had to be officially informed of their dissolution. The Racam, however, was not able to put its ambitious plans into effect. Under the direction of Delavignette, a policy of total opposition to the organization was implemented, and its organizers had to refrain from overt political activity or risk imprisonment. Such an untrammelled challenge to French colonial authority was not going to be tolerated.

Exactly a year after the "giant step" attempted with the Racam, a small number of Cameroonians came together in a bar in the Douala-Bassa quarter of Douala on 10 April 1948 to form the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC). The first declaration of the group was notably cautious, stating that it did not originate from "doubtful sources," was not guided "by a spirit of disruption," and did not emanate "from any foreign power and was not dependent on any metropolitan political party." If anything, it was one sentence toward the end of the UPC's bland declaration that gave a hint of the party's

27. Personal interview with Kingué-Jong, Douala, 1972. Excerpts from the Racam Constitution are printed in *Radical Nationalism in Cameroon*, app. II, and discussed there on pp. 87-90.

28. Smith, "A Comparative Study of French and British Decolonization," p. 102.

29. Personal interview with Kingué-Jong.

ultimate character: “. . . to group and unite the inhabitants of the territory in order to bring about . . . the consolidation of the Cameroon people into a federation by the implementation of a policy of rapid democratization and emancipation of the people exploited by colonial firms. . . .”³⁰

It was clear that the UPC organizers wanted to take whatever steps were necessary to achieve legal authorization. But, how about the administration? It was now three years since Africans had obtained the right to organize politically in France's overseas territories. For at least two years, political groups had been active elsewhere in French Africa. In Cameroon, the strength of the radical wing of the nationalist movement, and the hostility of the administration to all but the pro-French elites, had resulted in a stalemate. In short, for the authorities as well as for the nationalists, there was an overwhelming need for a new political initiative.

On 9 June 1948 the administration, deprived of hard evidence of any misdoing on the part of the new group, and squeezed between the terms of the French constitution and the lobbying efforts of RDA and French Communist *parlementaires* in Paris, officially acknowledged receipt of the UPC's statutes. The UPC's first public meeting was held two weeks later, on 22 June 1948. At a subsequent meeting of party members on 11 July 1948, Etienne Libai, a civil servant who appears from administrative records to have served as a double agent, was reminded that he had only assumed the leadership of the party because of the difficulties placed in the path of Léonard Bouly, the party's first secretary-general, and of his promise to step down as soon as he had finished his mission. Libai acknowledged these conditions and was dropped from the party's *bureau provisoire*, and his place was reoccupied by Bouly.³¹ The UPC had now been ushered into existence. But since the risk of being summarily banned still hovered over the party, the process of shedding its elaborate camouflage was not hurried.

It is apparent from the private correspondence of Félix Moumié and Um Nyobé that the tactic of using strawmen to lead the UPC was motivated by more than the fear of antagonizing the administration. The UPC organizers were able to use the fear of provoking the administration as a cover for the second operation, of neutralizing the old nationalist and largely Duala vanguard.³² Generally, however, Duala militants accepted this tactic at its face value: “If we do not immediately want to be on the *bureau* it is to spare this still very young movement the direct blows that the presence of Duala on it is

30. Ibid., 3–12 Apr. 1948.

31. APA 11337/A, CA, Report of UPC meeting at the home of Guillaume Bagal.

32. APA 11137/A, CA, Internal Memorandum of the Sûreté Générale, 29 Sept. 1948.

certain to provoke."³³ Consequently, the Duala elite, which for a century had played a leading role in relations between the people of this area and the Europeans, was gradually relegated after 1948 to a secondary position (albeit a still significant one in view of the Duala's small numbers). After its legalization, the UPC could proceed to expand into the interior without the drawback of appearing as just another instrument of the subcolonial hegemony of the Duala.

The diluted and refurbished version of the Constitution acceptable to the French now began:

Il est créé au Cameroun un mouvement dénommé "Union des Populations du Cameroun" qui a pour but de grouper et unir les habitants de ce territoire en vue de permettre l'évolution le plus rapide des populations et l'élévation de leur standard de vie.³⁴

The critical comments made by the UPC during its early months of existence were restricted to subjects on which it was on the surest ground, such as the question of protecting Cameroonians from the arbitrary expropriation of their land.³⁵ Moreover, the authorities had had so little direct contact with the party's organizers that when they obtained copies of the party's internal memoranda they immediately assumed that these documents had been sent from abroad.

As for the *programme de base*, the administration's own summary of its main objectives will suffice here: the revision of the trusteeship agreement between France and the United Nations concerning Cameroon; unification with British Cameroon; the reforming of the powers of the Cameroon Assembly; individual freedom and equality before the law; the elimination of the vestiges of the *indigénat* and forced labor; educational development and respect for African property rights; abolition of the *sociétés indigènes de prévoyance*; legal protection for workers; the recognition and teaching of local languages in the schools; and the progressive transfer of the economy into the hands of Africans. After compiling this list, the chief political officer of the administration could only venture the following comment: "One is now some distance away from the declarations of attachment to France expressed during the period when the first statutes were being revised and when the UPC feared it would not obtain the 'approval' it solicited."³⁶

33. Ibid., Report of Henri Lobe's remarks, UPC meeting, 11 July 1948.

34. APA 11167, CA, Revised UPC statutes deposited 14 May 1948.

35. APA 11167, CA, "Mouvement dit l'Union des Populations du Cameroun." See also Rapport de Sûreté, 10-17 Apr. 1948.

36. Ibid., "Note de synthèse sur le Mouvement."

THE POLICY OF CONTAINMENT AND DISLOCATION

It was the French authorities who were mainly responsible for resolving the contradiction between the official and the real UPC. To begin with, considerable pressure was brought to bear on the members of the party's *bureau politique* and Executive Committee. Since the majority of these individuals were employed by the administration, they were simply reassigned to remote corners of the territory. Some, like Léonard Bouly, who retained the title of secretary-general until December 1948 despite his transfer, eventually abandoned political activities. Others, like Félix Moumié and Andre Nyobé, made use of their exile to spread the UPC doctrine and sharpen their own radical critique of colonialism. The administration also indirectly brought to the attention of the UPC such potential militants as the *médecin-africain* Mathieu Tagny, whose "insubordination" had resulted in his being frequently transferred to new posts in the territory. The other real co-founder of the UPC, Charles Assale, soon dropped away, apparently because of political differences with other UPC organizers.

Throughout most of 1948, Um Nyobé was simultaneously leading the USCC and unofficially acting as the main theorist and organizer of the UPC. As mentioned earlier, he was elected one of the four vice presidents of the RDA at its congress in Abidjan at the end of 1948 while not yet officially a leader of the nationalist party in his own country. In early 1949 the strength of the UPC was placed at five hundred, and the head of political affairs, Christol, made the following assessment: "There does not appear at present to be any Cameroon political party or grouping of any sort capable of opposing the UPC."³⁷ He therefore prescribed strict surveillance of the movement, counterpropaganda, and the denouncing of the "true aims" of the UPC and the "immorality of its communist methods." In carrying out the latter task, he added, "the missions can play a considerable role." In this campaign of total opposition to the nationalist movement, the full force of the law was brought against any UPC member who crossed the very vague line between free speech and *calomnieuse dénonciation*. Furthermore, local administrators arbitrarily refused the UPC permission to hold meetings in public halls or even in the open. In consequence, the organizers of the new party were compelled to struggle with the French at every stage to exercise the whole gamut of their supposedly constitutional rights of free speech and assembly.

The emergence in Cameroon of a radical nationalist party that was eventually compelled to try to win power by revolutionary means can be seen to have been linked, from the outset, with the hostility of the French colonial

37. APA 11167, CA, Additif à la note no. 913 bis, 1 Feb. 1949.

establishment to any group that advocated autonomy or independence of the colonial territories. The UPC was not only forced to come into existence as a semi-clandestine organization, it was also obliged because of unwavering French hostility to operate on this basis throughout its "legal" life. When, following a series of riots in May 1955, the UPC was officially banned and had to continue its political and later military activities underground, the French had in effect corrected the anomalous situation they had been forced to accept during April to June 1948, that is, of conferring legal status on a party considered subversive. Furthermore, it could be argued that the radical UPC was as much a product of French assimilationist colonialism as of Cameroon nationalism. By bringing pressure on all moderate elements to refrain from nationalist activities during 1946–1949, the French were partly responsible for the emergence of a nationalist party led by inconspicuous individuals but seconded by determined radicals. When the party was reluctantly legalized, the administration made sure that its initial successes among the traditionalist, and hence moderating, ethnic associations would be reversed. As a result, in terms of its recruitment of cadres as well as in its organizational structure, the party's organizers *and* the French were constantly pushing it along more revolutionary lines.

After a year of intense repression in the Ivory Coast during 1949 and 1950, Houphouët-Boigny led the RDA *parlementaires* in adopting a change of policy that involved the severing of the RDA's ties with the French Communist party (PCF) and entered into collaboration with the French government. The UPC was only one of three RDA *sections*—the others were in Niger and Senegal—that openly refused to follow Houphouët's line. Except for its unique demand for independence (in the French African context) the UPC can be said to have upheld between 1950 and 1955 the political attitudes of the pre-1950 RDA. Such attitudes involved the retention of fraternal ties with the PCF and the maintenance of what could be termed a radical nationalist ideology. Unlike the other major RDA parties, which after 1950 adopted a position of silence on revolutionary developments in other parts of the world, and especially in other French colonial possessions, the UPC continued to demonstrate the radical internationalism of the pre-1950 RDA by strongly supporting the Vietnamese and Algerian nationalist movements.

Throughout its African empire, France employed the charge of "Communist" to justify its harsh repression of nationalist forces. During 1950 and 1951, when Gabriel d'Arboussier opposed Houphouët-Boigny's decision to disaffiliate the party from the PCF, his basic argument was that in breaking such ties, and in establishing links with other French parties devoid of any anti-colonial commitment, the leaders would be committing themselves to a disengage-

ment from the international anti-colonial struggle. The UPC held firm to this view, and Um Nyobé often contended that the "Communist" charge was in keeping with the colonialist ideology regarding the incapacity of colonized peoples to pursue their own struggle without external inspiration and direction: "For Black Africa in general the colonialists pretend it is composed of countries 'without problems,' where tranquillity would be absolute were it not for a few 'agitators' paid by Moscow to undertake trouble there, using slogans which are either ignored by the people or detested by them."³⁸

It is important to distinguish the dominant ideologies of the UPC during the period of its open political campaigns, 1948–1956, and that of the period of armed struggle after 1956. By the mid-1960s the party had split into factions, some of which allied themselves with the USSR or China while others continued the independent orientation professed earlier by Um Nyobé: "The Union des Populations du Cameroun is neither pro-communist or anti-communist."³⁹ It can be asserted that, during the 1950s, the UPC was not a Communist party. As one of the party leaders, Jean-Paul Sendé, remarked, the fact that some party members were Communists did not render the party any more a Communist party than did the presence of Catholics among the UPC make it a clerical party.⁴⁰

The most appropriate characterization of the ideology of the UPC is radical nationalism. The party was radical in that it sought a drastic change in the territory's economic structure, which it felt acted mainly to the benefit of colonial forces; it was nationalistic in that it considered the unification and independence of Cameroon to be necessary first steps in the attainment of a more socially just Cameroon society. Most of the UPC's pronouncements reflected the fundamental Hobson/Lenin critique adopted by most nationalist movements in Africa that colonialism and imperialism were consequences of the search by European economies for higher rates of profits through the exploitation of overseas territories. The UPC leaders during the 1950s did not develop an economic program for an independent Cameroon that could be characterized as socialist. In this regard, the UPC was acting on its conception of Cameroon as an exploited nation, all of whose people should be united in the primary struggle to end colonial rule.

Between 1948 and 1955 the UPC was confronted with considerable repression by the colonial administration. In addition to acts of physical intimidation, unwarranted searches and seizures, harassing arrests, the party was subjected to the massive falsification of the elections that occurred. Nev-

38. "Où en est le nationalisme camerounais," *Cahiers internationaux* 64 (Mar. 1955): 82.

39. *Ce que veut le peuple camerounais* (Paris, 1956), p. 81.

40. Cited in Zang-Atangana, "Les forces politiques au Cameroun réuni," thesis, University of Paris, 1963, p. 164.

ertheless, right up to the end of 1954, the exclusion of the UPC's representatives from the territorial political institutions was compensated for by two factors. First, beginning in 1949, the UPC utilized the right of petition provided by the trusteeship system to criticize all conceivable aspects of French rule in the territory, and especially the refusal of the French to prepare the country for the goals of "self-government or independence" prescribed by the U.N. Charter. The UPC also adopted the issue of unification of the two Cameroons and established links with political groups in the British Cameroons in pursuit of what, after 1952, became the twin issues of independence and reunification. What rendered the UPC even more of a threat to French rule, however, was the fact that the party had created—under the direction of its secretary-general, Um Nyobé—an impressive network of local committees throughout the territory. These committees were estimated by the French administration to number 450 in early 1955.⁴¹

RIOTS AND REBELLION, 1954–1958

One of the central questions regarding the UPC and its failure to inherit power from the French concerns developments during the period 1954–1956 when party militants came into increasingly violent conflict with French authority. In late 1954 the French government withdrew André Soucadaux, who had served as high commissioner since 1949, and replaced him with Roland Pré, who had established a reputation for firmness and dynamism in countering nationalist movements in other French territories such as Guinea. Roland Pré quickly went on the offensive against the UPC, which had survived six years of harassment and electoral fraud by the French and their local allies and agents and, moreover, now had no viable rival among Cameroonian political groups. Pré's campaign finally catalyzed a series of violent confrontations and riots in the major towns of southern Cameroon, and especially Douala, in May 1955, which mirrored those of a decade earlier in several respects.⁴²

In July 1955, using the May events as proof of the violent and insurrectionary aims of the nationalist party, the French government declared it illegal. During the year and a half after it was forced underground, the UPC leaders established, especially in the Sanaga Maritime, a clandestine organization while seeking to obtain the reinstatement of its legal status. It was definitely not conducting a guerrilla war, as earlier commentators had argued. Thus, during this period, not a single incidence of armed attack by the party could be

41. *Les émeutes de mai*, White Paper of the French High Commission, Yaoundé, 1955, pp. 6–7.

42. For a full account of these incidents and their causes, see Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroon*, pp. 239–88.

discovered. After the party failed to obtain an amnesty and relegalization in order to take part in the December 1956 elections for the territorial assembly, a series of steps led to the initiation of guerrilla warfare. At a party meeting on 2 and 3 December 1956 at Makai, the formation of the party's military organization, the Comité National d'Organisation, and a policy condoning attacks on UPC opponents were authorized. Between 7 and 9 December in Kumba (British Cameroons), a meeting of the UPC's youth wing was held under the direction of one of the party's vice presidents, Abel Kingué, to decide on what actions party militants should take with respect to the forthcoming elections to implement the recently voted *loi-cadre* of the French government. According to documents seized during the course of police operations on 21 December 1956, a number of resolutions were debated at the meeting, including one calling on the party's sections to abstain from the elections of 23 December "*dans le calme et la sécurité*." A majority of the delegates, however, supported the following position argued by Vincent Ndjog:

If our centers observe the total boycott calmly. . . . What will result? A striking victory for the colonialists and their valets. Our legitimate national aspirations will then be forever stifled. There remains one solution, one single one for getting out of the impasse and overcoming the danger. We must sabotage, demolish the voting booths. That is the duty of the sections and committees, each in its own region.⁴³

The French responded to this campaign with a series of military operations from 20 December in the Sanaga Maritime, which resulted in many deaths. During the nine months following the December incidents, however, there was a low level of overt guerrilla activities. Willard Johnson correctly attributes this situation to several factors: Um Nyobé's prime concern with organization, the degree of control he exercised over the *maquis*, the extent of his support among the people, and "his personal displeasure with unnecessary bloodshed."⁴⁴ Um Nyobé consequently gave instructions to his men "to avoid all contact with the military and the guards in order to pursue the organizational efforts without being disturbed."⁴⁵

On 9 May 1947, a "Cameroon State under Trusteeship" came into existence. André-Marie Mbida was appointed by High Commissioner (and future French Prime Minister) Pierre Messmer to head the first Cameroon government, an appointment that received the approval of the new Legislative

43. Cited in *La presse du Cameroun*, 24–25 Dec. 1956. See also *Afrique France Presse—Spécial Outre-Mer*, 25–26 Dec. 1956.

44. Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society* (Princeton, 1970), p. 355.

45. *Ibid.*

Assembly. In response to communications passed to the UPC's secretary-general from Messmer, Um Nyobé set forward his views regarding the basis for a dialogue between the interested parties in an open letter of 30 May 1957, entitled "*Les vraies solutions pour une détente politique et morale*."⁴⁶ In this document, Um Nyobé advanced a number of demands to the authorities: that an amnesty be declared for the May 1955 and December 1956 incidents; that the notion of a Cameroon state under trusteeship "be abandoned as self-contradictory"; and that a "solemn declaration" be made by the French government "regarding the recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Kamerun."⁴⁷ In making the latter point, the UPC leader stressed that the independence of "Kamerun" would not imply the departure of the French nor the elimination of the "French imprint" in the new state. A further demand made in this document was for the abrogation of the decree of 13 July 1955 banning the UPC in view of the continued political vacuum in the territory. The amount of attention devoted by the secretary-general to condemning the use of force is the most surprising feature of this document. This concern justifies the view that the UPC rebellion under Um Nyobé's direction was reluctant both in its motivations and its scope.

During 1957 the political situation worsened from the standpoint of both the UPC and the French. The French had succeeded in their plan of devolving political autonomy onto a prime minister and an assembly favorable to their continued presence and influence in the country. They therefore hoped that the UPC would come to realize the futility of its campaign for immediate independence. The French, however, were also confronted with the problem of having hoisted into power a prime minister who was proving to be "*plus royaliste que le roi*." Not only was Mbida making it quite plain that he was against a full amnesty being granted to the UPC, but he also declared before the French National Assembly in April 1957 that Cameroon lacked the political and economic maturity for independence, a stage that should therefore be postponed for another ten years. Within the country, despite the deliberate refraining of the UPC from violent activities, the prime minister was unpromising in his opposition to the nationalists.

On 13 July 1957, exactly two years after the banning of the UPC, Um Nyobé transmitted identical dossiers containing his proposals for a dialogue between

46. This document is available in extracts in *Interafrique-Presses* 117 (20 June 1957) or in full in *Les vrais solutions pour une détente politique et morale au Kamerun* (Paris, 1957). There now exists a very useful edition of the writings of Um Nyobé by J. A. Mbembe: *Ruben Um Nyobé: le problème national Kamerunais* (Paris, 1984).

47. The UPC adopted this German spelling of the country's name in the late 1950s as a way of symbolizing both its rejection of French Cameroun and its demand for the restoration of the integrity of a subdivided nation.

the UPC and the authorities to the high commissioner and the prime minister. Their refusal to make a satisfactory response to his initiative incited the party leader to issue a "new warning" to the authorities in September 1957. According to the U.N. Visiting Mission of 1958, beginning in September 1957 "U.P.C. adherents in the region . . . returned after a long period of relative quiet to organized acts of terrorism and plunder against whole villages as well as individual African chiefs."⁴⁸ According to the commander of the French forces, Colonel J. Lamberton, the main targets of UPC attacks were the active opponents of the party, especially the chiefs and private individuals working on behalf of the administration.⁴⁹ The attacks were not, as originally believed, the settlement of personal vendettas, but "concerted political acts of violence." Each guerrilla movement develops a structure to suit the particular political circumstances of its struggle, and Lamberton's analysis—based on documents seized during military operations as well as information extorted from captured guerrillas—is worth citing, as it throws some light on the politico-military aims of Um Nyobé:

With realism, Um Nyobé seemed committed to establishing a territorial basis for an insurrectionary government: to accomplish this it was sufficient to eliminate the French administration . . . to substitute for it the real authority of the Executive Committee of the U.P.C.; to usurp to its detriment the confidence and submission of the population and their traditional chiefs; to replace the official legislation by a revolutionary legislation: Birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates are henceforth issued by the Central Committee of the U.P.C. So also are the contracts and agreements in property transactions. . . .

The rebels avoided all encounters with the forces of order, obeying the instructions proscribing acts of sabotage as well as attacks against Europeans, because it was less a question of destroying the legitimate authority than of leading it gradually to lose interest in Bassa problems which would be settled among Bassa. At a later date, Um Nyobé would have been in a position to announce the effective dissolution of the administration in the Sanaga Maritime and would thereby set the example of a fraction of the territory liberated by its own means from foreign oppression.⁵⁰

There were a few unsuccessful attempts at mediation between Um Nyobé and

48. U.N. Trusteeship Council, T.1427, *Report on the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French Administration*, 23 Jan. 1959, p. 48.

49. *La pacification de la Sanga Maritime (Cameroun décembre 1957–janvier 1959)*, Centre Militaire d'Information et de Spécialisation pour l'Outre-Mer, 1960.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

High Commissioner Messmer, such as the one conducted by Bishop Thomas Mongo (like Um Nyobé, a Bassa) who met with Um Nyobé in the *maquis*. These attempts foundered on the fundamental contradiction between the UPC's insistence on the role it had to play in the transfer of power and the fact that the French were speeding up the devolution of internal autonomy to the Mbida government. On 27 August 1957, Um Nyobé put his signature to another document, entitled "*L'Amitié Franco-Camerounaise en Danger: Alerte à l'opinion kamerunaise et mondiale*." After a review of developments in the territory since 1955, he cited the favorable response of certain "third force" Cameroonians such as Dr. Tchungui to his July proposals for a political and moral détente in the territory. The French were then criticized for hiding behind the empty institutions they had set up in the territory, and for failing to carry out recent resolutions of the U.N. Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly for the restoration of a "normal political life" in Cameroon and the granting of an amnesty "to create a climate of total confidence in the territory."

Although the UPC leader had often criticized the limited political autonomy enjoyed by the Cameroon government, for the first time he showed a softening of this position. He acknowledged the two victories of the "Kamerunian nationalists" in their struggle against the *loi-cadre*: the fact that "Kamerun" was now a state "which henceforth precludes any further attempts, indeed any idea, of integrating our country into the French Empire"; and the fact that information furnished by the French government to the U.N. Trusteeship Council enabled the latter to pass a resolution recognizing the destiny of the Cameroon people to be independent. Um Nyobé had therefore come to recognize, two years after his party had been driven underground, that its efforts since 1948 were finally bearing fruit. Yet, while it was true that the UPC had forced the French to speed up the timetable of political advance in Cameroon, the French clearly did not intend, or expect, that it would be the nationalists who would benefit from these concessions. Once in office, Prime Minister Mbida's priorities were no longer identical with those of his French benefactors. First, he was not subjected to questioning in the United Nations on internal policy in Cameroon as were the French authorities. Second, he and the members of his conservative alliance were concerned that every step in the transfer of power should not only protect France's economic and political interests but also guarantee their role as the successors to the colonial authority. Such a situation was far from certain in 1957. Not only was the small number of moderate nationalists in the Cameroon Assembly an incorrect representation of their true support in the country, but, in view of the very real political vacuum, the legalization of the UPC would have meant a significant shift in the balance of power away from the conservatives.

In November 1957 Mbida tried to seize the initiative in dealing with the political stalemate in the country. He made a speech in Um Nyobé's home village of Boumnyébel in the Sanaga Maritime, where he issued an ultimatum to the UPC. That same month the French Council of the Republic was examining an amnesty bill for the UPC that Mbida strongly opposed. By declaring an ultimatum he knew the UPC would be little induced to accept, Mbida maneuvered the nationalists into appearing as the intransigent party. The Council of the Republic produced a bill that permitted only individual acts of pardon rather than a general amnesty, and this law was subsequently approved by the National Assembly in February 1958.

In December 1957, in a long communiqué to the press, Um Nyobé attacked all aspects of the anti-UPC campaign and especially the belief of Mbida and the French authorities that the only way to settle the conflict was for the UPC leaders to adopt Houphouët-Boigny's *repli stratégique* of 1950 and renounce their nationalist goals. Um Nyobé repeated the proposals he had earlier given to Monsignor Mongo for a political détente: the suppression of mercenary bands, the withdrawal of French military troops, the end of harassment by the judiciary, a full amnesty, and negotiations between the UPC and the French government. By this time, however, Um Nyobé's proposals and entreaties were falling on deaf ears. The French were confident in their ability to contain the UPC through military means while seeking the most satisfactory combination of political forces that could produce a stable Cameroon government.

In early 1958, with the continued terrorism in the Sanaga Maritime and the demonstrated inflexibility and arbitrary rule of Mbida, the French sent a new governor, Jean Ramadier, with the task of easing Mbida's replacement by Ahmadu Ahidjo, the minister of the interior and leader of the largest parliamentary group. Ramadier succeeded in mobilizing opposition to Mbida within the assembly and the Government Council, and Mbida was forced to resign in February 1958. Mbida's successor, Ahidjo, now embraced the cause of the moderate nationalists of the previous two years: independence and reunification, national reconciliation in the territory, and cooperation with France. By this time the French had recognized the inevitability of the trust territory moving toward independence and not some semi-autonomous status within a French African community. In June 1958 the Cameroon Assembly passed a motion requesting a modification of its statute to recognize its right to opt for independence, which the French now finally agreed to honor.

As the Ahidjo government replaced that of Mbida, and the "Cameroon State of Autonomy" came into effect, Um Nyobé sought to convince his fellow UPC leaders that further armed struggle was futile. Unlike Mbida, Ahidjo had moved some distance toward accepting the major items of the UPC's program of independence and reunification, albeit within the continuing framework of

a "French-Cameroon Community."⁵¹ In September, Um Nyobé's hiding place was apparently betrayed to the authorities, and he was captured alive but wounded. What then transpired has never been clarified, but it appears that the nationalist leader, like Che Guevara in Bolivia, was the victim of a decision that he should be killed rather than brought out of the forests alive. Shortly after the death of the UPC leader, some three thousand guerrillas in the Sanaga Maritime laid down their weapons. Yet the ending of Um Nyobé's *maquis* was not the final chapter in the UPC's armed struggle; a far more extensive insurrectionary stage emerged throughout southern Cameroon after 1958, linked with a social revolution among the Bamileke people.

In 1959 the United Nations took the unprecedented step of agreeing to end Cameroon's trusteeship without requiring new elections, thereby permitting the French to complete the devolution of power onto the government of Ahmadu Ahidjo. Thus the sovereign state of Cameroon arose not so much out of the realization of a national consciousness uniting diverse peoples into one movement against a colonial power but rather out of the suppression of such a movement. The abnormality of having not only to derive its legitimacy from the armed force of the colonial power, but also to suppress both radical and moderate exponents of the profound nationalist sentiments that we have traced here, resulted in the establishment of a highly repressive political and military apparatus during Ahmadu Ahidjo's two decades in power.

One of the most notable features of the post-World War II history of Cameroon is that the radical wing of the anti-colonial movement clearly predominated over that of the moderates. Such a situation was also in evidence in a few other African countries after 1948, for example, the Gold Coast and Guinea. Yet, unlike the CPP (Convention People's party) of Kwame Nkrumah and the PDG (Parti Démocratique de Guinée) of Sékou Touré, the UPC refused to take the step that became de rigueur for nationalist parties hoping to inherit political power from European colonial powers, namely, the breaking of ties with European Communist parties and between local trade-union federations—allied with the nationalist party—and the Communist-led World Federation of Trade Unions. There was always the possibility that the UPC leaders would have been recognized as *interlocuteurs valables* by the French had they taken steps like Houphouët-Boigny in 1950 and, to a certain extent, Sékou Touré during 1954–1955, to temper those features of their movements to which the French were most opposed.

As we have shown, when the UPC was formed in 1948 it was as much the inheritor of a tradition of anti-colonialism in the territory as the initiator of a

51. J. F. Bayart, *l'Etat au Cameroun* (Paris, 1979), p. 50.

concerted radical nationalist movement. A number of distinctive features of the UPC places it among the more significant political parties to emerge in tropical Africa during the period of decolonization. To begin with, the UPC's early and consistent demand for independence put it outside the mainstream of nationalist parties that emerged in French sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, coupled with this objective was the goal of reunification that the party continued to espouse even when the idea began losing its originality, and some of its advocates, in both Cameroons and the United Nations.

The influence of French Communist militants during World War II and the early postwar years on Cameroon nationalism should not be underestimated. A similar influence, however, was exercised elsewhere in French Africa where the emerging leaders quickly abandoned a Marxist or *Marxisant* perspective. Similarly, in Cameroon members of the nascent national elite from the center of the territory, who had earlier participated in the study group directed by the Communist militant Gaston Donnat, were later to be found comfortably entrenched in Dr. Aujoulat's reformist and strongly Catholic Bloc Démocratique Camerounais (BDC). Thus the adoption and retention of a radical perspective by the UPC were based on factors other than mere exposure to the thought of Marx and Engels.

The historical and socio-economic analysis provided in my general study explain in large part the receptivity of many Cameroon groups and intellectuals to a radical critique of colonialism.⁵² Of greatest importance was the increasing opposition of four of these groups to continued French rule: the sub-proletariat of the southern towns and especially New-Bell, Douala; the economically regressive peasantry of the Sanaga Maritime; the pioneering Bamileke farmers, transporters, and traders throughout the south, and particularly in the Mungo region; and finally the Cameroonian civil servants, blocked in their advancement by French domination of the upper echelons of the administration. Finally, reinforcing the radical outlook of the UPC were its close links with the CGT-organized trade union, the USCC.

When the RDA expelled the UPC from its organization at the Conakry Conference in July 1955, the following reason was given: "This *section* has adopted positions since 1950 which are contrary to the political orientation of this Movement."⁵³ In fact, it was more the Houphouët-Boigny wing of the inter-territorial party that had diverged after 1950 from the party's earlier positions. What is particularly significant about the RDA's expulsion of the UPC is that it indicated the extent to which the UPC's challenge to French colonial

52. See especially chaps. 4 and 5 of Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroon*.

53. Cited in "La Politique française au Cameroun," *Afrique informations* 41 (15-31 Dec. 1955):

policy now also constituted a threat to those who sought the evolution of these territories within the political framework of the French Union. There was little room for accommodation between, on the one hand, France's policy of assimilation and the continued dominance of its African territories and, on the other, the UPC's demand for self-government, self-determination, and independence.

The goals of the trusteeship system—self-government and independence of the trust territories—were based on principles that were at complete variance with the historical predispositions of the French for a unitary, centralized, and indivisible political order. Although the UPC, beginning with Um Nyobé's first appearance before the United Nations in December 1952, demonstrated this incompatibility, the French never made allowances for Cameroon's special status: "Unlike the British, the French could not—or perhaps would not—advance one territory at a time along its own schedule of reform."⁵⁴ Before 1957 the French therefore refused to alter the policy of trying to integrate the trust territory of Cameroon into the French Union on practically the same basis as its other African territories. Thus the UPC's demand for self-government and independence was treated throughout this period as subversive of the French constitution.

Although the UPC and Cameroon fell outside the mainstream of nationalist politics in French tropical Africa, when viewed from a broader perspective they appear less as exceptions and more in conformity with a particular pattern of decolonization after World War II. This pattern is that represented by those colonial possessions in which a significant nationalist movement arose demanding independence from France as its main goal. Thus, whereas political developments in Cameroon after 1945 differ greatly from those in Senegal or the Ivory Coast where the demand for independence was very muted or even disavowed before 1958, they have much in common with those of Indochina, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, where the struggle for independence was always at the center of nationalist activities.

With the UPC excluded from the assembly on which France intended to devolve greater powers, and with the moderate nationalists in disarray after being outmaneuvered by the authorities in the autumn of 1956, the French had obtained a political arrangement in Cameroon that two years earlier had seemed improbable. The price to be paid, however, for coercing the country into a sharply different direction from the one it appeared to be choosing was great indeed. On the one hand, armed struggle by the UPC continued for several years after 1956 and claimed the lives of several thousand persons. On

54. Aristide Zolberg, *One-Party Government in the Ivory Coast*, rev. ed. (Princeton, 1969), p. 103.

the other, the split between the moderate constitutional nationalists and the outlawed radical—later revolutionary—nationalists facilitated the capture of power by the conservative forces within the country who were prepared to permit the French to retain a pervasive role in the country's economy and in its military and political institutions.

After independence on 1 January 1960, the option was invoked to summon two French battalions to crush the wider insurrection that had broken out in 1959. During the next two years, most political figures in the territory rallied to the ranks of President Ahidjo's party, the Union Camerounaise, because of intense pressure brought against them as well as the declining fortunes of opposition in the country. In October 1962 another of the UPC's goals, reunification with British Cameroons, was partly achieved. While the northern section of the British territory voted in a referendum to be integrated into the northern region of Nigeria, the southern section voted to form a federal republic with the former French Cameroun. Over the next two decades, until his sudden resignation in September 1982, there took place an increasing centralization of power in the hands of President Ahidjo and the de facto prohibition of any form of political opposition in the country.

To return to our opening remarks, the Cameroon experience should be incorporated into explanations of the transfer of power in West Africa in a more systematic way. Tony Smith writes pertinently that "French policy was essentially the same throughout the empire: political reforms were granted only so long as they could be seen [as] tending to preserve French rule. Demands for change which might ultimately destroy the French presence were immediately to be squelched."⁵⁵ Thus, while the French proceeded after 1954 with piecemeal political reforms intended to defuse nationalist demands, the nature of the UPC challenge in Cameroon required more direct repressive action. By asking why French repression failed in Vietnam and Algeria but succeeded in black Africa, Smith puts the question in its appropriate form.⁵⁶ The seeming moderate demands of the political forces allowed to inherit political power from the French must be seen, in part, as *consequences* of French action in a number of domains. Only those political objectives acceptable to the French, and their attendant ideologies, personnel, and party structures, were allowed to operate within the legal political arena.

Because of its capacity to contain, harass, and repress the UPC, and the party's relatively limited means of resistance, locally and externally, the French administration retained considerable room for maneuver in the late 1950s. There were "other local fronts" on which the nationalists had to fight, for example, in the Catholic Center-South (around the capital of Yaoundé) and

55. Smith, "A Comparative Study of French and British Decolonization," p. 101.

56. Ibid., p. 102.

in the Islamized areas of the north controlled both by the French and the hierarchical structures of the Fulani emirates. These two areas gave the country its first two prime ministers, Mbida and Ahidjo, who were as keen to resist the UPC challenge as the French colonial administration were. And while the UPC's campaigns within and without the country were to continue throughout Ahidjo's reign, the alliance between the former colonial power and its African successors created a firm barrier to any advance by the country's Left.

The hope that Ahidjo's successor, Paul Biya would allow full democratization of the country's political system after 1982 and allow the UPC and other political forces to compete openly for power, has proven over-optimistic. Yet, some changes in the range of opinions that can be expressed within Cameroon, and in the country's recognition of its unresolved nationalist past, are already apparent. Having survived decades of repression and forced exile, the UPC is likely to remain a factor in the Cameroon political landscape for some time to come. While awaiting the day when it can compete as the party of the Left in a pluralistic system, the UPC will keep alive the memory of one of the most resolute political challenges the French had to contend with in their African empire, and act as a persistent critic of those governmental actions considered inimical to the welfare and future of the Cameroon people.

14. *Independence and the Longue Durée: The Ivory Coast "Miracle" Reconsidered*

TIMOTHY C. WEISKEL

Car garder l'Afrique, et y rester, n'était-ce pas d'abord en confier le soin aux africains . . . ? N'était-ce pas leur conférer à cette fin les droits politiques, économiques, sociaux . . . ?

—François Mitterrand, 1957¹

Coming to terms with decolonization in Africa requires an understanding of both event and process in history. Event-oriented narratives are the most common in the first phase of writing on decolonization, but after twenty-five years of "independence" in Africa it has become possible—indeed, necessary—to examine the events in a more complete context to reveal the underlying processes that the historical record illustrates with so much intriguing detail.

Event-oriented and process-oriented history are not intrinsically opposed to one another, because they are not, strictly speaking, competitive interpretations of history. Instead, properly pursued, each approach enhances the other. Long-term processes often take dramatic turns with particular events, and, conversely, individual events can be seen to be significant in long-term continua frequently unimagined by the contemporary actors themselves. Indeed, in the case of the Ivory Coast it is only by combining *l'histoire événementielle* with an analytical concern for *l'histoire de la longue durée* that the transfer of power becomes intelligible at all. Furthermore, it is clear that in terms of long-term history itself, several simultaneously evolving processes must be kept clearly in mind to clarify events.

1. François Mitterrand, *Présence française et abandon* (Paris, 1957), p. 177.

In the case of the Ivory Coast there are at least three strands of analysis that need to be woven together to account for contemporary circumstances. The first concerns what can be termed "political" event-structures, while the latter two have more to do with the long-term processes of local and global socio-economic evolution. Each deserves brief mention and subsequent elaboration.²

First we must examine the evolution of micro-politics in the post-World War II Ivory Coast. This involves the increased participation of the African subjects in Ivory Coast political elections and referenda, leading eventually to a declaration of independence in 1960. Moreover, our analysis of politics needs to encompass the reciprocally related, but partially autonomous, evolution of inter-African and international political events. These events include the postwar emergence of general African demands for independence from both Britain and France, the rise and fall of popular support for the Communist party within France, the anti-colonial struggles of Viet Nam, Madagascar, and Algeria, and the growth of cold-war anxieties within the Western alliance generally.

A second order of analysis has to do with the socio-economic evolution of postwar West African society under French control. Some of the changes in this realm were directly related to political events, but others were dimly discernable at the time, and only now can they be seen as trends with the benefit of hindsight. In this realm historically significant processes in the Ivory Coast include: massive rural migration, the extension of market infrastructure, the decline of white settler plantations, the growth of urban centers, the expansion of primary and post-primary education, the rapid but uneven extension of cash cropping, and the elaboration of ethnic and regional consciousness in the decade and a half just prior to the "transfer of power." From the vantage point of this level of analysis, independence does not always represent the dramatic break with the past that is suggested by a simple reading of political events. Continuity of these trends, not their reversal, seems to be the salient feature of the post-colonial period.

Finally, while the details of socio-economic evolution in the Ivory Coast remain unique to its own historical circumstance, the Ivory Coast nevertheless clearly shares several emerging attributes with other African na-

2. These three levels of analysis depart somewhat from the threefold analysis suggested by Wm. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson in their chapter, "The United States and the Liquidation of the British Empire in Tropical Africa, 1941-1951," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940-1960* (New Haven and London, 1982), pp. 31-55. Whereas they suggest focusing upon local, metropolitan, and Cold War political concerns, the inquiry pursued here considers political questions together as one of three realms that include as well both local and global socio-economic transformations.

tions—indeed, with many non-African societies as well. With a rate of natural increase of over 3 percent per annum, an extroverted economic infrastructure, an alarming rate of rural resource depletion (deforestation and soil erosion), an urbanization rate of nearly 7 percent per annum in the capital city, a growing dependence on imported foodstuffs, a mounting international debt, an aging political leadership, and a heightened awareness of ethnic difference, the Ivory Coast can be seen to reflect most of the difficulties that plague nations throughout the contemporary so-called third world. The agricultural crisis, the ethnic conflict, and the state of virtual bankruptcy that characterizes so many nations in Africa may well come to typify the Ivory Coast in the years ahead. The only essential difference between the Ivory Coast and the others, some would argue, is the question of time. Sooner or later the evolving structure of world production is more likely to lead the Ivory Coast in the direction of its impoverished African neighbors than in the often promised direction of ever-expanding prosperity characteristic of "developed" enclaves in Asia.

From this perspective, the much heralded Ivory Coast economic "miracle" may yet prove to be a mirage.³ Whatever the transfer of power can be said to have meant on a political level twenty-five years ago, it most definitely did not entail an independence from these formative global forces sweeping the contemporary world scene. The characteristics of the Ivory Coast are being forged by world-historic transformations only fully understood from the perspective of the *longue durée*, "as if on the basis of an infrastructure," as Braudel has suggested.⁴ On this level of analysis the transfer of power is perhaps more accurately understood as a "transfer of powerlessness," for independence did little to reverse the trends in these phenomena; indeed, it may have done much to accelerate their crippling evolution.

OVERVIEW OF POSTWAR DEVOLUTION

On the first level of analysis—the narrative of political events—the broad outlines of colonial devolution are well known. It is not necessary to retrace here the full sequence of electoral reforms and administrative decisions leading to independence in 1960, for this has been done elsewhere in works by Zolberg, Morgenthau, Mortimer, Yancono, and Gbagbo, among others.⁵

3. The concepts of "miracle" vs. "mirage" are suggested by Jean-Pierre Dozon, "De deux ou trois choses dont est fait l'état ivoirien," paper presented to the colloquium on "L'anthropologie politique aujourd'hui," Paris, Association Française de Science Politique, 29–30 May 1986, pp. 1–2.

4. Braudel's emphasis on the infrastructure of history is discussed below.

5. For general political surveys see Aristide Zolberg, *One-Party Government in the Ivory Coast*

After a brief recapitulation of the major steps in this sequence of events, we shall turn instead to a more detailed historical consideration of the formative events up to 1951. These include the first elections and the relations between Africans and successive colonial administrations in the immediate postwar period until 1951. The events of these early years determined the character of later reforms and the nature of the regime that assumed power at the point of independence. In many respects, what came after 1951 can be said to be merely a denouement in the transition to independence, for the basic structures in place by that point were to endure to independence and well beyond.

After an account of these early events, then, we shall turn from event-oriented narrative to consider more broadly the other necessary levels of analysis, highlighting the social origins of the local political process and the global trends in third-world evolution. When we come to reassess the transfer of power we can in this manner better understand what "power" meant in local terms, and what, if anything, can be said to have been "transferred."

In summary form, the Ivory Coast achieved its independence in August 1960 after nearly a decade and a half of incremental governmental reforms granting greater and greater autonomy to the colony within what became known as the French Union and then the Franco-African Community. Oddly enough, unlike the case of the British colonies, the granting of independence in the Ivory Coast was not the initial intention of the governing French, nor was it the essential demand of the dominant African elite.⁶ Rather, it came about as a result of trying to maintain political control in the face of a population swayed by the contagious precedents of political independence set by neighboring Ghana, Guinea, the trusteeship territories of Togo and the Cameroons and the Mali Federation. It was in some sense, an independence thrust on the Ivory Coast as part of a general movement of the French to modernize their relations with their West African colonies.

The reforms began with postwar Free French provisions to allow for the creation of trade unions and political parties and the call for African participation in the constituent assemblies responsible for drawing up a postwar constitution for the French Republic. In November 1945 Africans elected Félix Houphouët as their representative to the First Constituent Assembly to be

(Princeton, 1969); Ruth Schacter Morganthau, *Political Parties in French-speaking West Africa* (London, 1964); Edward Mortimer, *France and the Africans, 1944-1960: A Political History* (London, 1969); Xavier Yacono, *Les étapes de la décolonisation française* (Paris, 1971); and Laurent Ghagbo, *La Côte d'Ivoire: économie et société à la veille de l'indépendance, 1940-1960* (Paris, 1982). The brief overview that follows is drawn from these sources.

6. Michael Crowder, "Independence as a Goal in French West African Politics," in William H. Lewis, ed., *French-speaking Africa—The Search for Identity* (New York, 1965), pp. 15-41.

held in 1946. Once in the assembly he was instrumental in passing a law to abolish the hated practice of forced labor. This accomplishment won him great recognition and popularity within the Ivory Coast, and he was successively elected to serve in institutions of the French government in every subsequent election he entered.

In an attempt to consolidate the political gains of his first electoral victory in 1945, Houphouët and his supporters moved to form a political party in 1946.⁷ Known as the Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), the party allied itself in October 1946 with other French African political parties, forming a trans-territorial group known as the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) to coordinate their requests for reform to the French. In the context of French parliamentary politics Houphouët-Boigny⁸ allied himself in the assembly with the French Communist party and benefited from advice and organizational assistance from these quarters.

Within the Ivory Coast the PDCI militated to protect the rights of African plantation owners against the influence of the resident white settler population. The Communist alliance forged by Houphouët alarmed the settler community, and the abolition of forced labor challenged their interests as well. The colonial administration, after an initial period of support for African political and economic aspirations under Governor Latrille, turned instead to an open opposition of the militant members of the PDCI. The PDCI experienced defections, and open conflict led to violent incidents between PDCI supporters and opponents in 1949 and 1950. The administration intervened, arresting, trying, and imprisoning several of the PDCI's intellectuals in Grand Bassam.

In 1950 a full-fledged parliamentary committee of inquiry was sent from France to the Ivory Coast to investigate the political crisis that had emerged. After the commission had finished its hearings, and after a series of semi-secret meetings with colonial officials, Houphouët decided to make a final break with the French Communist party to facilitate a political rapprochement with the administration. In October 1951 he announced this change in strategy to the Ivory Coast public, many of whom—as previous militant supporters of the PDCI—were bewildered or enraged at the reversal it

7. It is significant that electoral victory *preceded* the organization of a formal party. See below.

8. After the 1945 election victory, Houphouët added the Boigny to his name. In the Baule language it means ram, and reflects an attitude of stubborn determination. Other interpretations of the name include one which indicates that the real meaning of the term is the phrase in Baule "bô agni," which means to beat or hit [i.e., defeat] the Agni, the major ethnic group in the southeast of the Ivory Coast. This interpretation appears to refer to Houphouët's defeat of Kouamé Binzème, the Agni people's favored candidate. See: J.-P. Dozon, "De deux ou trois choses," p. 14.

seemed to represent. There is little doubt that this decision constituted the essential turning point in the evolution of the late-colonial political order.⁹ Over the following years a close collaboration began to develop between Houphouët and the French colonial authorities.

Houphouët was reelected to the French Assembly in 1956, this time with tacit French support, and once in France he served as a cabinet minister in the Guy Mollet government. He retained the ministerial portfolio in successive French regimes through the first Debré government of the Fifth Republic. In the context of an increasingly bitter Algerian war and a rising tide of anti-colonial sentiment from Viet Nam to Ghana, the French government counted on Houphouët's faithful support of their gradual reforms toward greater administrative autonomy in West Africa, resisting the demands among other African leaders either for a united federation of West African states or for accelerated independence. He became the spokesman instead for gradualism and increased territorial autonomy. In 1958, when General De Gaulle presented the alternative in a referendum for West Africa between absolute and immediate independence on the one hand and associated status within the French Community on the other, Houphouët championed the cause of retaining close ties with France within a *communauté franco-africain*, rejecting the immediate demand for independence sought by Guinea.

Despite a willingness to defend a relationship of close association with France within this French Community, Houphouët finally abandoned the ideal of the Franco-African community when it became clear to all concerned that the idea was no longer viable. To resist the more militant demands from the Mali Federation (Senegal and Mali) for independence from France, Houphouët formed a union with Upper Volta, Niger, and Dahomey, known as the *Conseil de l'Entente*. This was a loose association of states determined to maintain close relations with France, and it served as one last effort of the "moderates" to find a formula, short of full independence, designed to indicate that reforms were being implemented toward greater African control in the running of political and economic affairs.

In terms of the formal transfer of power, however, events outpaced the Ivory Coast elsewhere in West Africa. Nigeria and the Belgian Congo were soon scheduled to join Ghana, Guinea, Togo, and Cameroon as fully independent states in West Africa, and when De Gaulle consented to the idea of granting the Mali Federation its independence in 1959, Houphouët submitted his resignation as minister to De Gaulle and announced he would declare the Ivory Coast an independent state. On 11 July 1960 accords were signed for

9. In French the series of events leading to the reversal became referred to in later years as "le Grand Tournant," or "le désapparentement," or "le retournement" of Houphouët. See discussion below.

the *transfert de compétence* from France to the Ivory Coast and other members of the *Entente*, and on 7 August 1960 the Ivory Coast became an independent country.

In the last stages of devolution, particularly from 1956 to 1960, international circumstances and French metropolitan politics played the dominant role in determining the precise timing of the transfer of power. It would be a mistake, however, to become over-fascinated with this micro-political narrative. If we seek to understand the origins and consequences of independence, we must reexamine precisely what constituted power and what can be said to have been transferred in these quickened moments of history. To make sense of the rapid succession of events and their long-term implications, it is necessary to return in the Ivory Coast case to the pre-1951 political events to expose in detail the fundamental structures of Ivoirien political life.

REEXAMINING THE ORIGINS OF IVORY COAST POLITICS

In the pre-war era Africans did not have much opportunity to participate in the political life of the colony. Unlike Senegal where Africans of the four principal towns enjoyed the right to vote since the nineteenth century, Africans in the Ivory Coast were not granted the vote in practice until after the war. Administrative decrees dating as far back as May 1912 created the framework for electoral processes in West African townships, but Abidjan was not historically a large town in French West African terms. It did not become the capital of the Ivory Coast until the August 1933, and only then did it begin to grow rapidly. By 1935 it had reached 25,000 inhabitants¹⁰ but it was not until 1939 that it was elevated to the status of a *commune mixte du deuxième degré*, enabling it for the first time to hold elections in which African subjects could vote. Theoretically, elections for a municipal council could then have taken place with African participation, but the fall of France in June 1940 and the subsequent establishment of the Vichy regime in West Africa intervened to preclude any application of these measures.

If formal political elections had been allowed in the colony, there would no doubt have been an active African participation, for by the 1930s Africans had ample grievances. After having been excluded progressively by European companies from the business of forestry exploitation during the 1920s, and after being displaced from the control of local petty commerce by an immigrant Syrian population who arrived from 1928 onwards, African populations seeking an income turned increasingly to growing cash crops for sale, prin-

10. Philippe Oberlé, *Côte d'Ivoire: images du passé (1888-1980)* (Colmar, France, 1986), pp. 9, 10.

cipally coffee and cocoa.¹¹ African planters consisted, not simply of villagers seeking new forms of income, but also of village chiefs and notables subject to administrative pressure and a small educated elite whose jobs in the civil service gave them cash to employ villagers or migrants from the northern regions of the Ivory Coast as laborers on their farms.¹²

This pattern of cash-crop farming meant that government policies concerning the rural areas had an immediate impact upon a significant portion of the African elite working as government civil servants, teachers, and auxiliary medical personnel in the small towns throughout the colony. For these individuals the inequities of the colonial system began to weigh more and more heavily as the depression hit in the 1930s. Paid with lower salaries than their European counterparts for similar work, these individuals had sought to supplement their salaried income by establishing plantations of coffee or cocoa, but here too they felt their aspirations disappointed.

During the depression commodity prices fell generally for all producers. At the same time, however, the colonial administration stepped up efforts to encourage the immigration of European agricultural colonists in an attempt to secure a continued supply of bananas, coffee, and other tropical products without having to expend precious foreign exchange. European settlers in West Africa had never constituted a very large group beyond those directly involved in the import-export firms or the administration, but from the 1930s onward immigrant settlers involved in plantation agriculture were to make their presence felt economically and politically in the Ivory Coast.¹³ In Abidjan several newspapers began to appear expressing the European planters' opinions on government policy.¹⁴ Moreover, the colonists conveyed their

11. F. J. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire dans la cité africaine* (Paris, 1951), p. 73.

12. For studies of the emergence of the African farmers in the southeastern Ivory Coast see: A. J. F. Köbben, "Le planteur noir: essai d'une ethnographie d'aspect," *Etudes eburnéennes* 5 (1956); Gabriel Rougerie, "Les pays agni du sud-est de la Côte d'Ivoire forestière," *Etudes eburnéennes* 6 (1957): 7–213; and M. Dupire, "Planteurs autochtones et étrangers en Basse-Côte d'Ivoire orientale," *Etudes eburnéennes* 8 (1960): 2–236. For information on their development west of the Bandama River see: H. Raulin, "Mission d'étude des groupements immigrés en Côte-d'Ivoire," *Problèmes fonciers dans les régions de Gagnoa et Daloa* 3 (ORSTOM). As yet there is no historical study of the emergence of indigenous planters among the Baule in the center of the country, but the dynamics of early African cash cropping in this region are discussed in T. C. Weiskel, "Labor in the Emergent Periphery: From Slavery to Migrant Labor Among the Baule Peoples, 1880–1925," in W. L. Goldfrank, ed., *The World-System of Capitalism: Past and Present* (Beverly Hills, 1979), pp. 207–33.

13. For a description of the role of European planters see: Hubert Fréchou, "Les plantations européennes en Côte d'Ivoire," *Cahiers d'Outre Mer* 29 (Jan.–Mar. 1955): 56–83.

14. A useful summary of the activity of the press appears in Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, pp. 61–66. See also: Raymond Guillaneuf, "La presse en Côte d'Ivoire: la colonisation: l'aube de la décolonisation, 1906–1952," diss., University of Paris, 1975. In the early 1930s the principal

opinions to administrators less publically but no less effectively through the Chambre de Commerce and subsequently the Chambre d'Agriculture. With the arrival of the Popular Front Government in France it became possible to establish trade unions in the colonies, and on 28 July 1937 the Syndicat Agricole de la Côte d'Ivoire was formed to formally represent planter interests. Subsequent reforms in 1939 made it possible also for African planters with a *certificat d'études primaires* to join the *syndicat*, but in practice the Europeans dominated the organization, and the few African planters who did become members felt that their interests were not well represented.

The nascent conflict of interest between European settler planters and African planters during the 1930s revolved around their differential access to African labor and discriminatory prices set by the administration.¹⁵ Prior to 1941 both African and settler paid the same price to wage laborers on their plantations, but the settler planters were able to count on the administration to assist them in recruiting forced labor through African chiefs, while in practice the African planters were denied this advantage. These contradictions became more pronounced during the Vichy period from June 1940 until the end of 1942. Prices were fixed by the administration, and European planters were paid more for the same commodities of coffee and cocoa. The European price for coffee, for example, was set at 4.50 francs per kilo, while Africans were paid only 2.60 francs, and African planters were expected to assume their own transport costs.¹⁶ In addition, European planters were given priority access to scarce imported goods, obliging Africans to obtain these goods only on the black market.

The fall of the Vichy regime did not bring with it an immediate amelioration of local circumstances on these issues of central importance, which stimulated

journals that expressed European settler opinion included *Le bulletin mensuel du groupement agricole de la Basse Côte d'Ivoire*, founded in Jan. 1931 by Jean Rose and *Les vérités*, a weekly started in May 1932 by Jean Rose and Roger Rappet. The latter had a printing of fifteen hundred copies and intended "défendre les petits et moyens colons, les fonctionnaires et les indigènes de l'Afrique Occidentale Française," but among these it seemed to emphasize settler concerns. Jean Rose went on to found two further journals: *l'Avenir de la Côte d'Ivoire* and *Le cri du planteur*, which defended settler interests in explicit terms.

15. For information on what became referred to as "la crise de main d'oeuvre" from 1936 onward see: Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 111. See also Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 169-70.

16. Although the Vichy period was a short one in the colony's history, it was vividly remembered by Africans for the numerous acts of petty racism on the one hand and for the way in which the white settlers, with the help of the administration, stepped up their recruitment of forced labor to work on European plantations. For a brief account of the mood and feelings during the war see: Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, pp. 38-44, 111; and Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 15-16, 169-70.

a sense of African political frustration and aggravated the African sense of grievance. The policy of forced labor, however, was by no means limited to the Vichy period. In fact, the recruitment of labor may have become more intense after the entrance of West Africa into the war effort on the side of the Allies, as prices for export commodities fell with the absorption of the West African zones into the Allied economic sphere and, simultaneously, production quotas remained high as part of the war effort.¹⁷ One administrative measure of the Free French in particular irritated African farmers. As part of a policy to stimulate production for the Allied war effort the administration in 1944 declared that a premium of 1,000 francs per hectare would be paid to any farmer with twenty-five or more contiguous hectares in production. The size limitation included all the European plantations but eliminated from consideration all except a few of the largest African plantations. In addition, African planters themselves could be subject to forced labor recruitment for the European plantations, while their own plantations—if not properly maintained—could be destroyed by sanitary teams “allegedly because they were infected with plant diseases but in fact because they were competing too successfully.”¹⁸

Thus, the first months of Free French administration served to heighten the Africans' sense of grievance against the colonial system. African contributions to the Free French war effort had been significant in several respects. In the first place, it was in Africa that Free France was first able to establish itself after the German occupation of June 1940. De Gaulle tried unsuccessfully to occupy Dakar, but he was eventually welcomed in the Cameroons, and from there he built a force to assist in the recapture of North Africa. Second, Africans provided a significant number of troops for the war effort itself.¹⁹ Finally, the accelerated commodity production from 1943 onward helped the Allied cause but victimized African farmers in comparison with the European plantation settlers. Because of these sacrifices Africans, and particularly the elites based in the towns, looked to the postwar era with the expectation that the *Comité Français de la Libération Nationale* would be responsive to their desires for reform.

To discuss the future of the African colonies in these circumstances, a group of Free French colonial leaders met in Brazzaville from 30 January to 8 February 1944. After their meeting they published a document that was to become the cornerstone of postwar French reform in the colonies.²⁰ Viewed

17. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, pp. 45–46, 49.

18. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, p. 62; Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 112.

19. Mortimer states that one hundred thousand Africans fought in the war on the Allied side, providing at one point more than half of the effective French force, but no specific source is cited for these figures. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, p. 48.

20. Commissariat aux Colonies, *La conférence africaine française, Brazzaville* (Algiers, 1944).

as a document in the history of decolonization, the Brazzaville publication seems very conservative indeed, for its very first resolution declared emphatically: "The aims of the civilizing labours of France in the colonies exclude all possibilities of development outside of the French imperial system; the eventual formation even in the distant future of self-government in the colonies must be dismissed."²¹

At the same time, however, consistent with its vision for rebuilding an enlarged basis for the postwar French Empire, the Brazzaville Conference called for colonial participation in a postwar Constituent Assembly intended to draft a unitary constitution for both France and its colonies. Moreover, it called for increased local autonomy in matters of budget and administration within each of the territories. In the realm of social concerns the Conference called for the eventual cessation of forced labor and the reform of the administrative system of justice known as *l'indigénat*, by which administrators could summarily punish local villagers by imprisonment or condemnation to forced labor. From this vantage point, the conference was heralded as a significant break with the previous tradition of French colonial administration. Colonial settlers regarded the conference resolutions as a threat to their role and began to organize throughout West Africa against the change in policies that the resolutions seemed to imply.²²

In 1943 the Free French provisional government in Algiers appointed André Latrille as governor of the Ivory Coast. He was a participant in the 1944 Brazzaville conference, and during his tour of duty in the Ivory Coast he began to institute changes in administrative policy. He adopted measures that had the effect of removing some of the privileges of the European planters who had been Vichy sympathizers. Indeed, he and his *chef de cabinet*, Lambert, went further than this. They actively encouraged African planters to split off from the European-dominated Syndicat Agricole de la Côte d'Ivoire to form their own cooperative.

This the Africans did. On 3 July 1944 several large African planters met in Abidjan and formed what became known eventually as the Syndicat Agricole Africain (SAA).²³ The organization was recognized by the administration on 8 August, and it held the first Congrès des Agriculteurs Africains at the Maison

hereafter the *Brazzaville Records*. The provisions of the Brazzaville document are summarized by Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 37–41. See also: Laurent Gbagbo, *Réflexions sur la conférence de Brazzaville* (Yaoundé, 1978).

21. *Brazzaville Records*, p. 35, cited in Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 38.

22. Their efforts led to a conference in Douala in September 1945 of what was called Les Etats Généraux de la Colonisation Française, an organization to give voice to colonial settler opinion.

23. Jean-Noël Loucou, "Aux origines du Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire," *Annales de l'Université d'Abidjan*, Series I *Histoire* 5 (1977): 85.

du Combattant in Abidjan in September 1944. The congress voted a number of resolutions aimed at providing African farmers with a more equitable chance to produce against the competition of European plantation owners, and in the process the SAA elected officers: Félix Houphouët, president; Joseph Anoma, vice president; Marcel Labhouët, secretary-general; Gabriel Dadié, secretary in charge of information; and George Kassi, treasurer.

The precise details of who took the initiative to form the SAA are not fully clear. In the nationalist historiography, Félix Houphouët is given credit for the initiative in an attempt to defend African rights against those of the European settlers.²⁴ Other sources indicate that Latrille and Lambert may have had a crucial role in suggesting the idea of a separate African cooperative to Houphouët.²⁵ In any case there is no doubt that once it was formed, the SAA initially received official support from Governor Latrille—a policy that was to be radically reversed when Latrille left the colony and was replaced by Comte de Mauduit in 1945.²⁶ What seems clear is that Latrille and some of the large import-export firms had arrived at the conclusion that the prospects for future cash-crop expansion were brighter if based upon African production than if they were based upon the traditional European plantations.²⁷ This decision was a radical departure from both prewar and Vichy policy, and it proved to be the most important watershed in postwar Ivory Coast history. Despite the vigorous attempts of settler interests to reverse this fundamental choice in the following years, ultimately Latrille's decision provided the long-term basis for a new kind of relationship between the Africans and the administration that was to endure throughout the late colonial and post-colonial periods until the present day.

At first it seems that membership in the SAA was open to any African farmer, but in a key policy decision Houphouët insisted that recruitment should be limited to well-established planters. In a letter to SAA recruiting agents dated 19 April 1945 he stated: "Refusez comme adhérent tout Africain ne possédant pas au moins deux hectares de caféiers ou trois hectares de cacoyers en

24. See, e.g., the popular children's book, *Il était une fois . . . Félix Houphouët-Boigny*, published by the Fondation Houphouët-Boigny (Paris, 1978), p. 11.

25. See: Amon D'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 112; and the testimony of Etienne Djaument before the investigative commission of 1950 in M. Damas, *Rapport fait au nom de la commission chargée d'enquêter sur les incidents survenus en Côte d'Ivoire*, Rapport No. 11348, Annexes, Assemblée Nationale (Paris, 1950), hereafter *Rapport No. 11348*, p. 967, as well as A. Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, p. 66. Latrille himself was ambiguous on the subject: Testimony of Latrille in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 1074, 1087.

26. In addition, Amon d'Aby also suggests that the SAA at some point received financial support from the Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africaine (SCOA), one of the largest import-export firms. Amon D'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 114.

27. See supporting documents to Latrille testimony in *Rapport No. 11348*, p. 1087.

rapport."²⁸ Those with more than this minimum included an estimated fifteen thousand African planters, but this provision clearly excluded others with smaller, dispersed plots. This was the case for many of the local Bété planters in the region west of the Bandama river, who felt themselves eliminated by this gesture from effective participation in the SAA and much of the subsequent postwar political activity.²⁹

Under Latrille the administration expressed its support for the SAA in a number of ways. Cars and scarce gasoline were made available to SAA members to help them recruit further adherents. Even more significantly, however, Latrille instituted a decree of 31 May 1945 that lifted the obligation of forced labor for any African farmer with two hectares of coffee or three hectares of cocoa trees.³⁰ It was perhaps only a coincidence that these minimal requirements were precisely the same as those enumerated by Houphouët in the 19 April letter as a prerequisite for membership in the SAA, but, coincidence or not, the effect of the measure was to extend the popularity of the SAA. A membership card in the SAA was tantamount to exemption from forced labor.

Perhaps equally important, the SAA appealed to African farmers because it promised to recruit labor for them directly from the major chiefs in the northern Ivory Coast and Upper Volta. Labor recruitment had until this point been the monopoly of the administration, which recruited labor through the traditional chiefs in the north and allocated it principally to the European plantations near the coast. Many of the young men from the northern regions of the Ivory Coast, which at the time included the territory of Upper Volta, resented the strictures of forced labor and preferred instead to migrate to the Gold Coast to work as share croppers for Gold Coast cocoa farmers. This created a general labor shortage for both the European and African planters. While the Europeans were able to overcome the shortage by a more severe imposition of forced-labor regulations, these measures made northern labor look even more fondly toward the Gold Coast. In the process African planters found virtually no labor at their disposition.

As an auxiliary doctor in Abengourou from 1928 to 1930, Houphouët had witnessed the departure of many able-bodied Ivoirien laborers toward the Gold Coast because of the better prices offered for labor and particularly because of the chance migrant laborers had to work for a share of the crop. In 1944 he proposed to make the same kind of labor provisions possible to African planters in the Ivory Coast, arguing that with the increased production these

28. Circulaire no. 13 du "Syndicat agricole africain de la Côte d'Ivoire," 19 Apr. 1945, cited in P.-H. Siriex, *Félix Houphouët-Boigny: homme de la paix* (Paris and Abidjan, 1975), pp. 55-56.

29. Dozon, "De deux ou trois choses," p. 13.

30. Siriex, *Félix Houphouët-Boigny*, p. 58.

arrangements would make possible, the administration could maintain the colony's overall output without having to resort to forced labor for the European plantations. He further argued that the European planters could afford to undertake the same kinds of new labor-recruitment arrangements.

European plantation owners reacted strongly, appealing to the governor-general in Dakar that such changes in the labor relations within the colony would ruin them. In January 1945 Houphouët traveled to Dakar to plead the case of the African planters before Governor-General Cournarie. Unwilling to decide the matter, the governor-general ordered the leaders of the SAA to meet with the major representatives of the European settlers to try to resolve their differences and come to a common accord on labor recruitment procedures. Two full days of discussion took place in Dimbokro without a successful compromise. In effect the meeting ended in a stalemate with a challenge to Houphouët and the SAA to proceed on their own if they wished to try to recruit the labor they needed.

With the approval and assistance of Governor Latrille, Houphouët traveled north to meet with Gbon Coulibaly in Kohorogo and the Moro Naba in Ouagadougou, appealing to them to provide labor to SAA members, promising the workers better wages and a share-cropping arrangement that Houphouët argued had worked so well in the neighboring Gold Coast. Despite the opposition of local administrators who tried to convince the traditional chiefs to maintain their customary recruiting arrangements with the administration, both the Moro Naba and Gbon Coulibaly agreed to recruit labor for the SAA members rather than for the white plantations. Although the traditional chiefs had benefited to some degree by remittances paid to them under the previous labor recruitment arrangements, they found that it had become increasingly difficult to mobilize the manpower required of them, and they were disposed to accept Houphouët's offer of a substantial increase in wages for their laborers.³¹

In effect, the new labor recruitment policy pursued by the SAA offered major advantages to four major constituencies. The African planters of the Basse Côte were finally able to obtain the needed manpower to maintain and expand their operations. The traditional chiefs in the north saw their authority respected and their laborers enthusiastically volunteering for work in the south. The laborers themselves enjoyed higher wages and avoided the onerous working conditions on the European plantations. And, finally, the administration was pleased with the African enthusiasm, finding it useful to support the SAA as a means of settling scores with former pro-Vichy settlers.

31. Testimony of Houphouët in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 5–9. Joseph Anoma accompanied Houphouët on this trip north. See his brief account cited in Siriex, *Félix Houphouët-Boigny*, p. 53–54.

Perhaps most significantly in the long run, the new provisions made it attractive for African planters to expand their operations, giving the administration reason to hope for a significant boom in export production.

Under these conditions, it is understandable why membership in the SAA swelled with official approval from an initial figure of sixteen hundred in September 1944 to an estimated twenty thousand in a few short months.³² This dramatic growth of the SAA provided the single most important focal point for African political aspirations in the immediate postwar period, and its sense of struggle set the tone for the ensuing political activity in the colony. As one observer has summarized the African position, "Potentially a safe bourgeois element in African society, the planters were driven to radicalism by government policy and European competition. Deprived of forced labour themselves, they began to reflect seriously on its iniquity as a system."³³

THE FIRST ELECTIONS

Against this background of antipathy, Abidjan held its first elections for a Municipal Council on 26 August 1945. This constituted the first election in which African subjects as well as French citizens could participate by voting for candidates on a separate electoral roll. On 11 August 1945 African leaders met in the headquarters of the Union Franternelle des Originaires de la Côte d'Ivoire to select a list of candidates to present in the election. Yapobi proposed an electoral list of both Africans and Europeans, but Houphouët, fresh from his experience of contending the settlers interests on the labor issue, argued persuasively that European interests and African interests were fundamentally different and that the group should present a solidly African set of candidates for both the first and the second electoral roles. This was technically possible, for a small number of Ivory Coast Africans and several resident Africans from Senegal and Dahomey had in fact acquired French citizenship and were entitled to run on and vote for the first electoral role.

Houphouët's arguments won the day. The group formulated lists for both electoral roles and began to campaign under the name of Bloc Africain, confident that if Africans could get out the vote they would win the election. As one contemporary observer put it, "Après le meeting du 11 août aucun indigène ne pouvait s'opposer à la volonté de tous ses compatriotes."³⁴ The European community was shocked and alarmed by the seeming exclusiveness of the all-

32. Later literature refers to twelve thousand "adhérents" and twenty thousand "sympathisants." La Fondation Félix Houphouët-Boigny, *Il était une fois . . . Félix Houphouët-Boigny*, p. 11.

33. See also Loucou, "Aux Origines du Parti . . .", p. 85.

34. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, p. 62.

34. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 48.

African slate, and after unsuccessfully trying to get the elections postponed, they issued a last-minute appeal for everyone to abstain from voting, hoping that a meager turnout at the polls would invalidate the election. Many voters did in fact stay away from the polls on the 26th, but ultimately the strategy did not work. Of the 4,132 eligible voters only 1,523 voted, but of that number the Bloc Africain received 1,495 votes.³⁵ It seemed to everyone that a united African electoral strategy could sweep all before it.

Houphouët did not present himself as a candidate in the municipal elections, but he had been the originator of the Bloc Africain strategy. The experience no doubt taught him a great deal about how to build coalitions among different factions of the African constituency. With this awareness behind him Houphouët's electoral ambitions focused in a different direction. On 22 August 1945, only four days before the municipal elections, an administrative ordinance was passed making it necessary for the Ivory Coast to elect two representatives—one for French citizens, one for French subjects—to the forthcoming Constituent Assembly. The assembly, to be held in Paris, was to develop a new constitution to present to the French and colonial public as the basis for the postwar government. These elections, scheduled for 21 October 1945, presented the first occasion for an African from the Ivory Coast to be elected to a post of considerable public importance in Paris.

Although reportedly reluctant at first to present himself as a candidate, Houphouët agreed to run for the position on the second electoral roll. After a vigorous campaign, he led the field of candidates in the balloting on 21 October 1945, but the administration declared that he did not receive a clear majority, and a subsequent run-off ballot would be needed. Houphouët eventually succeeded in winning the election on a second ballot, held on 18 November 1945.³⁶ Despite the concerted support from the SAA, the outcome of the election was by no means considered automatic, for the election covered a constituency far larger than the principal zone of activity of the SAA in the southeast of the colony. In addition, the strategy of uniting behind a single candidate that had been so successful for the Bloc Africain in August collapsed completely within a few short weeks of the municipal elections. In October no fewer than fourteen candidates presented themselves on the second roll. The final vote was very close, with Houphouët receiving 12,980 out of 25,596 votes, or only 50.71 percent of the total.

35. Ibid., p. 49; J.-N. Loucou, "Les premières élections de 1945 en Côte d'Ivoire," *Annales de l'Université d'Abidjan*, series I, *Histoire* 4 (1976): 5–33.

36. Accounts of the preparations for the election and the election itself include: Testimony of Houphouët in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 13–16; Testimony of E. Djaument in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 968–69; Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, pp. 54–56; Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 179–81; and Loucou, "Les premières élections," pp. 15–22.

In part, the relatively poor showing of Houphouët and his SAA supporters can be attributed to the fact that the colonial administration by this time had reversed its policy toward the SAA. The voice of the colonial settlers was beginning to make itself heard. In September of 1945, just when the African elite in Abidjan was trying to decide on candidates for the October election, settlers from throughout the French colonies met in Douala, Cameroon, to map out strategy to protect their interests, forming what became known as Les Etats Généraux de la Colonisation Française. Their opinions were heard in French colonial circles. At the same time in the Ivory Coast there was a change of administration. Governor Latrille left the colony on 8 August 1945 on leave, and the European settlers lobbied successfully with French colonial authorities in Paris to prolong his leave and keep him from returning during the autumn of 1945. During his absence he was replaced by Comte de Mauduit, who withdrew the administration's support from the SAA.

The new administration sought actively to encourage the candidacy of other Africans to challenge Houphouët in the election. It succeeded in prevailing upon the Moro Naba, the king of the Mossi Empire, to present a candidate of his own choosing, Tenga Ouédraogo—the Baloum Naba (chief of pages) of the Mossi Empire. Houphouët had sent Alloh Jérôme as an emissary to the Moro Naba to try to forestall his naming an independent candidate, but the mission failed, and despite the fact that Tenga Ouédraogo could not read or write French, Houphouët found himself confronted with a formidable electoral opponent. Tenga could count on the nearly unanimous support of the Mossi peoples near Ouagadougou as well as those Mossi who had immigrated in search of work to the southern Ivory Coast.

Throughout this election, Houphouët depended on the united and spirited support of the SAA and its regional representatives for his success. The SAA itself recognized that an electoral victory would be necessary to consolidate the gains they had made in the face of European settler opposition, and the organization began to take on the form of a political party.³⁷ Its membership was represented by *délégués régionaux* from the small towns, principally in the southeast of the colony,³⁸ and they worked hard in their regions to get out the vote for Houphouët.

The large number of Baule among these original regional delegates no

37. "Dès septembre 1945, devant les élections législatives, le Syndicat Agricole Africain se transforma en fait en un organisme politique." Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 113.

38. Initial delegates included: Antoine Ecare, Abidjan; Joseph Anoma, Agboville; Lamine Touré, Bassam; Samba Gueye, Aboisso; Amend Bertrand, Tiassalé; Laurent Yao, Dabou; Moussa Coulibaly, Bouaké; Jean Kouadio, Béoumi; Bernard Kouassi, Sakassou; Brou Benoît, Tiébissou; Mamadou Coulibaly, Oumé; Koba Kouamé, Dimbokro; Amoakon Dihié (Houphouët's brother-in-law), Abengourou. Loucou, "Aux Origines du Parti Démocratique," p. 86.

doubt led some to feel the organization had an ethnic base to it, but strictly speaking this was not true. Many non-Ivoirien names appear as well, representing communities of resident aliens in the small towns, principally Senegalese, employed either as government clerks or as agents in the import-export businesses. Amon d'Aby explained that Houphouët "avait comme agents électoraux divers chefs de canton ou délégués régionaux du Syndicat Agricole Africain, et surtout une importante équipe de Sénégalais possédant une grande expérience des questions électorales."³⁹ Houphouët's initial following among the Baule was most probably not very impressive, for many remembered the collaborating role his family had played in the initial conquest of Baule territory by the French. In the first instance, Houphouët's strongest support came from outside his own ethnic group. Subsequently, when he emerged as a colonywide political spokesman and ethnicity itself became highly politicized, the Baule began to support him more consistently.⁴⁰

In addition to the support of the SAA, then, Houphouët's victory depended on two crucial agreements that he reached with members of the Africa elite from regions beyond those where the SAA had most of its influence. The largest of these regions was the immense area of what later became the autonomous territory of Upper Volta. In the face of the candidate put forward by the Moro Naba, Houphouët needed support from other quarters in the northern regions. Ouëzzin Coulibaly, a former *directeur d'études* at the prestigious William Ponty school in Dakar, was from the Bobo region of Upper Volta, and although the administration had encouraged him to run as well he had refused. After a meeting with Houphouët in September 1945, Ouëzzin agreed to support Houphouët's candidacy, and he worked effectively to get out the vote for Houphouët in the Bobo region. According to a later political assessment, "It is doubtful whether Houphouët would have won this election without the support of most voters from the Bobo-Dioulasso region. . . . The Bobo votes made the difference."⁴¹

The second key alliance that assisted in Houphouët's victory involved the support of Etienne Djaument, a school teacher who had been among the founders of the Union des Originaires des Six Cercles de l'Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire (UOCOCI) in Abidjan in October 1944. This group emerged from the former Mutualité Bété and drew together the elites from those regions includ-

39. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 56.

40. For the early role of Houphouët's maternal uncle in the conquest of Baule territory see: Houphouët's testimony in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 11–12, and T. C. Weiskel, *French Colonial Rule and the Baule Peoples: Resistance and Collaboration, 1889–1911* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 191–93, 205–06.

41. Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 180.

ing Daloa, Gagnoa, Sassandra, and indeed all the regions west of the Bandama. Etienne Djaument indicated to Houphouët early in 1945 that he would support him if there was to be only a single position available on the African electoral rolls. On 8 September 1945 members of the African elites in Abidjan held a meeting at the Croix du Sud, and in that meeting Etienne Djaument and the UOCOCI put forward Houphouët as the candidate that all Africans should unite behind. Not every one present agreed. The Abidjan "intellectuals" debated among three possible candidates that they preferred, and the Mossi contingent under Sébango Pahi decided to let the Moro Naba decide. Houphouët was not, therefore, the unanimous or spontaneous choice of the meetings, but it appears that the UOCOCI put forward his candidacy, and their assured support was instrumental in launching his successful candidacy.⁴²

From this very first campaign, a pattern of electoral politics developed in the Ivory Coast that was to characterize in its essentials all the subsequent elections in the territory to the present day. The overwhelming feature of political activity was that it proceeded structurally from the top downward—that is, from the elite toward the dissatisfied masses and from Abidjan toward the hinterland. It is important to emphasize that the first territorial election was fought *prior* to the creation of a political party. Indeed, the creation of an organized political movement to represent popularly based sentiment was not foremost in the minds of the politically active African elite. The essential goal was to win the legislative seat. The means to that goal was one of mobilizing groups that already existed in the urban and small town constituencies to vote as a united bloc in favor of a selected candidate. Questions of ideological consistency or class interests were not uppermost in anyone's mind. What mattered most was mustering a strategic set of alliances that would last until the vote was counted.

The most convenient groups at hand to use as effective electoral tools were the regionally defined mutual-aid societies located primarily in Abidjan. Some of these groups existed well before the war, but others seemed to emerge in the immediate postwar period. As Amon d'Aby observed:⁴³

L'un des phénomènes les plus curieux enregistrés en Côte d'Ivoire au lendemain de la Libération est la tendance très marquée des élites autochtones vers la création d'associations régionales, et ce phénomène est d'autant plus intéressant à signaler qu'il ne vient de nul part, pas même de la Gold Coast ou du Sénégal. Il demeure spécifiquement cote d'ivoirien.

42. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 55; Testimony of E. Djaument in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 968–69. In 1947 Djaument was later to have a major falling out with Houphouët, and he then seemed to regret having put forward Houphouët's candidacy in the first place.

43. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 36.

Mais s'il est curieux de constater cette floraison de groupements régionaux, il est encore plus surprenant d'observer qu'elles se situent juste au lendemain de la Libération.

As it became clear that these associations, rather than neighborhoods, occupational groups, or trade unions, were to become the building blocks of alliance politics, they began to grow in the postwar era on an ever-expanded scale, investing ethnicity with a charged political significance it had not previously enjoyed.

Trying to give analytical priority to either ethnicity or politics in the Ivory Coast is thus a fruitless task; each was a function of the other and each rapidly emerged by calling the other into being. Throughout the colonial period the administration created an arena for the effective structuring of ethnic difference, and in doing so it enshrined and politicized the notion of "tribe" as an organizational principle in the Ivory Coast. As Immanuel Wallerstein observed, "Colonial administration is not a thin veneer over a traditional base. It is a framework within which new social relations are forged, a framework in which the relations of African and European, of African and African are radically changed. . . . On the whole, the European impact on tribal life has been to *consolidate* the units."⁴⁴ In the postwar era the repeated and frequent electoral campaigns for territorial assemblies as well as the campaigns for institutions of metropolitan France and the French Union had the effect of sharpening ethnic self-consciousness and making ever more remote the realization of a national identity.

Houphouët's political popularity increased throughout the colony in April 1946 when during the First Constituent Assembly he was successful in passing a law to abolish forced labor. In addition, with the help of parliamentary allies he succeeded in returning André Latrille to the Ivory Coast as governor in early 1946. Latrille and Houphouët worked cooperatively once again in the colony and made tours together throughout the territory, leaving many with the impression that Houphouët was henceforth in charge of the country's policies. It was in the context of this triumphant return that the Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) was organized in April 1946. With a core of support from the initial membership of the SAA, the PDCI sought to extend its presence throughout the territory by forging the kinds of strategic alliances with ethnic associations in urban areas that Houphouët had found so useful in the first elections. The constitution proposed by the First Constituent Assembly was defeated by popular vote in May of 1946, and in June the PDCI

44. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Road to Independence: Ghana and the Ivory Coast* (Paris, 1964), p. 9 (emphasis in original). Jean-Pierre Dozon speaks of the "crystalization" of ethnicity. See Dozon, "De deux ou trois choses," pp. 5ff., and his book *La société bété* (Paris, 1985), pp. 341–56.

mobilized the ethnic associations to reelect Houphouët as the African deputy to the Second Constituent Assembly.

The European settler community, smarting from the abolition of forced labor, responded by trying to engineer a strike of wood-cutting operations. These were necessary to supply fuel to the railroad and the electrical generators in Abidjan. Latrille retaliated by inviting members of the SAA to organize the wood-cutting operations, and the strike was crippled. But this was not the end of Europeans' protest by any means. In the June election, they rejected Governor Reste whom they had previously elected in the October 1945 elections, choosing instead a more forceful proponent of their interests, M. A. Schock. Beyond this the settlers then took their grievances directly to Paris to air them while the Second Constituent Assembly was meeting. From 30 July until 24 August 1946 the *Etats Généraux de la Colonisation Française* held meetings and the headquarters of the *Comité de l'Empire Française* with the rallying cry, "To Save the Empire."⁴⁵

Meanwhile, in the French Assembly Houphouët had linked himself for voting purposes with the French Communist party, feeling that they alone would be consistent in pursuing effective reform in the colonies. In the Ivory Coast members of the French Communist party established *Groupes d'Etudes Communistes* and helped the PDCI extend its organizational activities throughout the country. This alliance generated further alarm among the settlers, who called for the administrative suppression of the PDCI.

In response to the Paris meeting of the *Etats Généraux*, Houphouët and other French African political leaders called for a meeting in Bamako, Mali, during October 1946. There they forged an inter-territorial alliance of political parties under the banner of *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA). The PDCI had been born six months previously, but it was henceforth to become known as the Ivory Coast territorial section of the RDA. Some African leaders, mistrusting the alliance that Houphouët had made with the Communists stayed away from the meeting, leaving the way clear for the French Communist advisers that did attend to dominate the planning sessions.

In the Ivory Coast the radical anti-colonial rhetoric of the PDCI-RDA increased as the party gained new adherents beyond its initial core of SAA membership. As the party sought to build its resources by extending its membership and collecting dues in rural towns, sympathizers and opponents of the party clashed over a whole series of local problems. Traditional issues, including succession disputes, became politically charged affairs, sometimes with implications well beyond the immediate area. In the Abengourou region among the Agni-Indénié, for example, a succession dispute emerged when

45. Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, p. 46.

King Boa Kouassi died in 1943. Contenders included Essey Bonzou and Amoakon Dihyé. In early 1947 partisans of each clashed in Abengourou, and Governor Latrille intervened forcefully against Essey Bonzou, the legitimate heir, favoring instead Amoakon Dihyé, an SAA supporter and brother-in-law of Houphouët.⁴⁶ As Zolberg noted: "Most of the events were localized in urban areas and pitted natives against immigrants."⁴⁷ Interventions like these did much to arouse the fear of traditional chiefs, yet it became clear to them that it would be best to establish some kind of alliance with the PDCI. Some chiefs forged these alliances but seemed to be acting more out of a sense of self protection than from spirited enthusiasm for the party's cause.

When Latrille left the colony in February 1947, the administration once again dropped its support of the PDCI, and his successor, Governor Péchoux, worked instead to favor the resident Europeans. This strategy served to deepen the sense of African bitterness and heighten the sense of struggle among party militants. The administration's new strategy was to urge members of the civil service, private firms, and chiefs to abandon the PDCI. Individuals were encouraged to defect from the party and set up their own parties, and those that already existed in opposition to the PDCI were given new support.

At the same time, economic circumstances in the colony aggravated the anti-colonial sentiment. Cash incomes were advancing faster than new imports could keep pace with, resulting in inflation. At the same time, however, the postwar shortages of commodities were over, and prices for exported cocoa and coffee dropped. By late 1948 the French government purchasing agency for cocoa accumulated all the stocks it needed, and merchants began to offer producers only half of the regular price for cocoa because of the glut. The following year, by contrast, prices were up for coffee in response to a growing French consumer demand. These fluctuations of price coupled with a steady inflation in the cost of imported goods contributed to the African's sense of being cheated by the European merchants with the tacit support of the administration itself.⁴⁸

The tensions of the late 1940s came to a climax as more and more individuals, for reasons of their own or under the persistent pressure of the administration, began to abandon the PDCI and openly question its seemingly doctrinaire association with the French Communist party. In late January 1949, after the second international meeting of the RDA, Etienne Djaument,

46. Amon d'Aby, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 59; *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 967, 1079. The documents presented as supporting evidence in the *Rapport* contain numerous accounts of political disturbances in which PDCI partisans and local opponents confronted one another in local disputes.

47. Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, p. 132.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 111–112.

one of the earliest and strongest supporters of Houphouët, resigned from the PDCI and sought to hold a public meeting to explain the reasons for his departure. The meeting ended in disorder, but Djaument promised to begin again on 6 February. When the time came, PDCI partisans and opponents clashed violently in the streets, and the administration intervened to arrest and imprison many of the militant PDCI leaders. After an eventual trial, sixteen were acquitted, but nine others received sentences of two to five years in prison.⁴⁹

Even more violent clashes occurred the following year in the Baule region of the central Ivory Coast.⁵⁰ Houphouët avoided arrest on several occasions only because of his parliamentary immunity, but other PDCI-RDA leaders and sympathizers were not so fortunate. In one famous incident in Dimbokro on 29 January 1950 party militants reluctant to release one of their leaders were fired upon by a combination of French troops and settlers, leaving thirteen dead.

These and other violent encounters provoked heated questioning of the government's policy in the French Parliament in February 1950, and at the suggestion of Léopold Senghor Parliament decided to launch an official commission of inquiry into the circumstances in the Ivory Coast. From May to December 1950 members of the commission met with some 150 individuals including governors and former governors, village chiefs, European plantation owners, PDCI militants, and prisoners in attempt to clarify the character of political evolution in the colony.⁵¹

Meanwhile, after the bloody Dimbokro incidents Houphouët returned to Paris. He avoided making openly provocative statements that might antagonize the administration. During the trial of the PDCI militants in March, for example, Houphouët did not testify publically in their behalf. It seems that the Dimbokro affair and, as some have suggested, the beginning of the Korean war led Houphouët to reevaluate the RDA's alliance with the French Communist party. Through the intermediary of Alphonse Boni, a Baule lawyer working at the time in the French Overseas Ministry, Houphouët began to make contacts with French authorities to see if less combative relations with the

49. See account by Djaument of the incidents in *Rapport No. 11348*, pp. 977ff. Bernard Dadié, one of the condemned prisoners, kept a journal that has recently been published. It is instructive reading, particularly concerning the mood of party militants and their degree of awareness of similar anti-colonial struggles occurring in the neighboring Gold Coast. Bernard B. Dadié, *Carnet de Prison* (Abidjan, n.d. [c. 1982]).

50. Full evidence of the violence in the interior is given in extended testimony in the *Rapport No. 11348*; it is also admirably summarized in Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 188–202.

51. Their published findings, referred to here as *Rapport No. 11348*, constitute an impressive compendium of documentation on Ivory Coast political life and thoroughly document the emergence of the PDCI.

administration might be possible to arrange.⁵² In June 1950 he was interrogated by the commission investigating the Ivory Coast incidents, and his testimony clearly showed a desire to open more cooperative avenues of consultation with the French. At the same time, in conversations with Raphaël Saller, the French senator from Guinea, and in July 1950 in talks with Henri Siriex, Houphouët expressed the desire to work cooperatively with the French toward a peaceful devolution of power. From August through October 1950 Houphouët with the aid of Siriex met with the René Pleven, the head of the French government, and subsequently with the newly appointed minister for Overseas Territories, François Mitterrand.

In the course of these meetings Mitterrand and Houphouët reached a firm agreement: in exchange for progressive reforms toward greater African participation in governing the colony and a relaxation in the administrative repression of the PDCI-RDA, Houphouët agreed to break openly with the French Communist party and renounce the militant style of anti-colonial activism that had come to characterize the RDA.⁵³ There remained the difficult question of how each of these figures would present the dramatic change in policy to their respective followings, but this was resolved during 1951.

In February 1951 Mitterrand made a trip to Abidjan, ostensibly to inaugurate the new Vridi Canal that linked Abidjan as a deep-water port to the sea. He issued instructions to the local administration that he wished to be seen meeting publically with the leadership of the RDA, speaking with them henceforth as responsible leadership. At the same time he instructed his administrators to make sure that the RDA as a militant party would do poorly in the forthcoming elections of 1951, as if to burn Houphouët's political bridges behind him. "Pour dire les choses crûment, François Mitterrand fait bourrer les urnes. Quelques caciques du RDA devaient ainsi mordre la poussière. Telles étaient alors les mœurs."⁵⁴ Houphouët kept his part of the bargain. In addition to breaking with the French Communist party in Parliament, he held

52. Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, pp. 135–36.

53. Accounts of the steps in this major turning point differ, as might be expected with such a controversial change of policy. See: Mitterrand, *Présence française*, pp. 165–200; Siriex, *Félix Houphouët-Boigny*, pp. 117–44; and Catherine Nay, *Le noir et le rouge, ou l'histoire d'une ambition* (Paris, 1984), pp. 185–92. Recent African judgments of Houphouët's October 1950 deal are harsh: "Ainsi commença la rédemption de F. Houphouët, marquée par le désappointement, . . . et le retour en Côte d'Ivoire dans le sillage, sinon dans les bagages du Ministre de la France d'outre-mer." Marcel Amondji, *Félix Houphouët et la Côte d'Ivoire: L'envers d'une légende* (Paris, 1984), p. 137.

54. Nay, *Le Noir et le Rouge*, p. 192. In reality the PDCI still won 61 percent of the votes cast, despite the administration's efforts. Nevertheless, because the two contested seats were to be awarded on the basis of proportional representation, Houphouët won, but Ouezzin Coulibaly lost. Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, pp. 137–39.

an open meeting in a large football stadium in Abidjan on 16 October 1951 in which he publically renounced all further association with the Communists and projected a vision of a forthcoming era of Franco-African cooperation within the French Union.

In the formulation of this major policy reversal, the exemplary role of British decolonization seems to have been decisive in the French "official mind." In particular, the policies pursued by the British government in the Gold Coast, implementing the 1947 Cohen-Caine Committee Report, made a deep impression on Mitterrand. After all, the Gold Coast developments marked a significant departure from previous British policy as well. Even in the context of avowed strategies of decolonization that the British were pursuing elsewhere, the Cohen-Caine report was a breakthrough. As historians later assessed it,

The Cohen-Caine report indicated a radical shift not only in the perspective of the planners but also in their social and political values. They seemed to be losing interest in governing Africa from London precisely because they had become interested in developing and modernizing it. As they did so, they changed the aim of policy from one of jealously conserving imperial power in alliance with African kings and chiefs to one of national-building hand in hand with modern African elites.⁵⁵

The report was implemented in the Gold Coast over the period from 1948 to 1951. During that time Mitterrand made two visits to Accra, and he could not help but be impressed by the rapid and seemingly successful devolution of power under way in the British colony. It is not certain whether or not he saw or read a copy of the Cohen-Caine report. But that matters little, for what is clear is that the example itself stimulated his imagination. Mitterrand put it succinctly as he recalled his impressions six years later:

Passant une première fois par Accra, la capitale, en 1949, je n'avais pu rencontrer N'Krumah: il était en prison. Passant une seconde fois dans la même ville, un an plus tard, je le vis dans un palais tout just édifié: il était chef du gouvernement. Entre-temps, des élections libres, réalisées sous le contrôle équitable et fair-play des anglais, avaient donné une écrasante majorité à son parti qui s'était aussitôt installé au pouvoir. . . .⁵⁶

The advantages of such a policy became apparent to Mitterrand upon reflection.

55. Wm. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, "The United States and the Liquidation of the British Empire in Tropical Africa, 1941-1951," in Gifford and Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa*, pp. 42-43.

56. Mitterrand, *Présence Française*, pp. 172-73.

tion. Henceforth, in the official mind of French colonialism, progressive administrative devolution was to become part of a more subtle strategy for continued control: "Car garder l'Afrique, et y rester, n'était-ce pas d'abord en confier le soin aux africains . . . ? N'était-ce pas leur conférer à cette fin les droits politiques, économiques, sociaux . . . ?"⁵⁷

It is 1951, then, rather than 1960, that marks the crucial turning point in the history of the modern Ivory Coast. From that date forward Houphouët worked in close collaboration with successive colonial administrations until 1960 and beyond to assure a gradual transfer of power. The precise timing of events had more to do with inter-colonial pressures and international events than with the growth of significant political consciousness in the Ivory Coast itself.

Indeed, within the colony, as the militant activities characteristic of the 1946–1950 period subsided, political activity confined itself more and more to debates within an increasingly centralized party. In 1951 a radio station was installed to inform and influence public opinion, and a local newspaper of mass circulation, *Abidjan Matin*, began publication. Governor Péchoux, the much hated symbol of arch-colonial repression, was removed, and in December 1951 Pierre Messmer "was sent to the Ivory Coast to transform the territory into the showcase of the French Union."⁵⁸ The PDCI became an auxiliary organ for executing government policy, a mechanism for mobilizing the masses rather than a means of consulting them or expressing popular will.⁵⁹

These, then, were the origins of the transfer of power. What were the consequences?

THE ECONOMIC "MIRACLE" RECONSIDERED

It was particularly appropriate that the symbolic gesture chosen to express the dramatic turn in Franco-African political relations was the inauguration of the Vridi Canal in February 1951. Investments of this kind in the infrastructure of expanded commerce became the hallmark of Ivory Coast history for the next three decades.⁶⁰ With the opening of the canal to the sea, ocean-going vessels

57. Ibid., p. 177.

58. Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, p. 98.

59. For the steps in the gradual bureaucratization and atrophy of the party as a mass political movement see Zolberg, *One-Party Government*, pp. 147–320.

60. The information for the following summary paragraphs is drawn from economic assessments of the late colonial and post-colonial period, including: Samir Amin, *Le développement du capitalisme en Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, 1967); B. A. den Tuinder, *Ivory Coast: The Challenge of Success* (Baltimore, 1978), the report of a mission sent to the Ivory Coast by the World Bank; J. Suret-Canale, *Afrique noire*, vol. 3, *De la colonisation aux indépendances* (Paris, 1972); and his chapter

could bring heavy equipment directly to dockside and railside in Abidjan. Materials and machinery for road building, railroad maintenance, canal work, the creation of airport facilities, and construction of electricity generating stations began arriving in significant quantities. In 1950 the first mass storage tanks for petroleum were installed near the Vridi Canal, and henceforth a petroleum-based power and transportation infrastructure could be supplied with regular shipments of foreign oil imports. In 1957 the railway was converted from wood to diesel fuel, giving greater hauling power to the engines, and it was extended to Ouagadougou, facilitating the internal diffusion of trade goods in massive quantities and the simultaneous arrival of willing manpower from the Mossi and Bobo regions of Upper Volta.

Limited industrialization occurred in some sectors of the economy. In industries that served as auxiliaries to the expansion of construction and infrastructure extension (cement and reinforced concrete, for example), local plants were created. In addition, some industries emerged to process primary agricultural export commodities for more efficient transportation to Europe (principally cocoa and coffee processing, and peanut-oil extraction plants). Otherwise activity confined itself until the 1970s to the development of import-substitution industries for mass consumption goods (a match factory, breweries, a bottling plant, a textile factory, and a shoe factory).

In overall terms, however, the evolution of the economy did not depart from but rather accentuated and elaborated the classic colonial model based on an expansion of import-export trading firms. As the large commercial firms like The Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) and the Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain (SCOA) abandoned the petty commerce of the interior, African and Lebanese merchants emerged, at first as their agents and eventually on their own or in charge of trucking firms to supply other petty merchants in the interior. None of the earlier colonial firms were seriously challenged. As Suret-Canale summarized it: "The expansion and diversification of commerce did not call into question the preponderance of the old trading companies; at most they had to make room for a few new companies. . . ."61

The trade bonanza, facilitated by an expanded infrastructure, was fueled by

"From Colonization to Independence in French Tropical Africa: The Economic Background," in Gifford and Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa*, pp. 445-82; Semi-Bi Zan, "Équipement public et changements socio-économiques et Côte d'Ivoire (1930-1957)," *Annales de l'Université d'Abidjan*, series I *Histoire* 11 (1983): 247-55; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, "La mise en dépendance de l'Afrique noire: essai de périodisation, 1800-1970," *Cahiers d'études africaines* 16 (1976): 7-58; and her paper "The Transfer of Economic Power in French-Speaking West Africa: From 'Colonial Exclusivity' to 'North-South' Relations (1956-1980)," presented at the Conference on Decolonization and Transfer of Power, Zimbabwe, 1985.

61. Suret-Canale, "From Colonization to Independence," p. 456.

the growth of peasant cash-crop agriculture, principally in cocoa and coffee. Overall figures illustrate the extent of the boom. The value of total exports from the Ivory Coast increased from 17,481 million francs in 1951 to 31,492 million francs in 1958, exceeding the value of exports from any other of the French West African colonies. Similarly, the value of imports rose over the same period from 15,372 million francs to 22,827 millions, leaving the colony with a significant positive trade balance.⁶² Coffee and cocoa were the motor force behind the growth of exports. By 1953 coffee represented 46.80 percent and cocoa 41.25 percent of the value of exported goods for a combined total of over 88 percent.⁶³ In proportional terms, these values varied somewhat during the late 1950s and early 1960s, but their prime role as a stimulus to all economic activity remained clear. By 1958 coffee accounted for 60 percent and cocoa for 20 percent of the export values.⁶⁴ In addition, timber started to register as an important export commodity as the use of mechanical logging equipment and road transport enabled foresters to penetrate inland.

Within the crucial rural sector, the growth of agricultural production had three significant characteristics. First, expansion of production took the form of increasing the numbers of people involved in planting without any major changes in the size of operations or the capital investment applied to improving the production process. As one study observed: "Increases in national cocoa and coffee output have been accounted for more by a rise in the number of peasant producers, than by an expansion in farm size or output per farmer."⁶⁵ Second, the rise of cash-crop production paralleled both an absolute and a relative decline in foodstuff production. The pattern was established early on, and 1951 was the crucial breaking point in this transformation.⁶⁶

62. Figures are from the summary table in Morgenthau, *Political Parties*, pp. 415–16. A thorough study of the trade and production figures from 1951 onward has yet to be done and promises to be difficult. Most latter-day statistical sources give material from 1960 onward, abruptly omitting earlier figures. In addition, the change in the value of the French franc with the arrival of the Fifth Republic makes it hard to demonstrate the essential patterns of continuity, which seem nonetheless to be very pronounced in reality.

63. Pierre Messmer, *Rapport présenté à la session budgétaire 1954 de l'Assemblée Territoriale de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Abidjan, 1954), charts following p. 202.

64. Ivory Coast. Direction de la Statistique, *Situation économique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Abidjan, n.d. [1964]), p. 119.

65. Robert M. Hecht, "The Ivory Coast Economic 'Miracle': What Benefits for Peasant Farmers," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 21, 1 (1983): 26.

66. Messmer, *Rapport présenté*, pp. 88ff. The decline in local foodstuff production is closely related to the penetration of wheat-based staples in the diets of the urbanized Africans. Imported grain, ground into flour in the Grand Moulins d'Abidjan, served as the basis for a growing trade in French bread. This bread became widely consumed in small towns as bakeries established themselves in the interior. The tilting of African diets toward European consumption patterns parallels the broader process of urbanization discussed below.

Finally, and most significant politically, much of the expanded production was made possible by the massive arrival of "strangers" in the forest regions of the Ivory Coast as part of what might be called a pattern of rural inter- and intra-territorial migration. Some of this involved the migration of Baule planters to live among the Agni in the southeast or the Bété populations near Gagnoa. In other instances individuals or groups from the north or from Upper Volta resettled in the south in this manner.⁶⁷

In most cases the dynamic developed along the following lines: during the 1950s regions that had not been reached by the early transportation infrastructure were brought into the market nexus, and all land near roads became valued for its potential to produce cash crops. In the southeast of the colony, where cash-crops had a long-standing history, land was becoming relatively scarce, and because of the relative proximity to the colonial towns labor was expensive. As a result, immigrants from these areas with a long history of cash-cropping began to move into the regions to the west of the Bandama River, buying up or leasing land to bring into cash-crop production. Relations between immigrant strangers and the local populations could be strained, especially when local groups wished to participate in the cash-cropping boom.

Tension along these lines flared up in the initial period of SAA organizing during 1944 to 1946. After 1946 the PDCI under Houphouët's leadership did little to placate these tensions, for the party often intervened on the side of the strangers by reinforcing their title to land. Houphouët was himself a substantially wealthy Baule planter with plantation holdings in each of the towns in which he had served as an auxiliary doctor during the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, he had formed close alliances with other elites in these interior towns, often including those Africans involved in trade and transport of cash crops. This "agrarian bourgeoisie" formed the core membership of the SAA and the PDCI itself, and Houphouët's entire postwar effort in the realm of economic activity had been to favor the expansion of entrepreneurial farmers like himself. As one Ivory Coast historian summarized the transition of the early 1950s, "La bourgeoisie agraire ivoirienne abandonna ses positions de combat pour rechercher une alliance de classe avec le colonat et l'administration."⁶⁸

There has been considerable debate as to whether or not the dominant farmers in the Ivory Coast who emerged in charge of the PDCI constituted a real bourgeoisie. They certainly formed a self-conscious group with money to

67. Dupire, "Planteurs autochtones et étrangers"; Raulin, "Mission d'étude des groupements immigrés"; and Dozon, *La société bété*, pp. 276–356.

68. Gbagbo, *La Côte d'Ivoire*, p. 99. The term "bourgeoisie agraire" is contrasted in Gbagbo's writings with what he calls the "bourgeoisie bureaucratique" (p. 100).

spend for hiring labor, but whether they invested their money in labor-saving capital to improve productivity as a capitalist bourgeoisie might be expected to, is now being questioned. Moreover, in the judgment of some observers government policies emerging from the 1950s and the 1960s may have forestalled the development of a true bourgeoisie capable of making capital improvements in intensive agriculture. A marketing board known as the Caisse de Stabilisation was created in 1955 to protect farmers from fluctuations in price, but one of its enduring functions seems to have been to assure a growing bureaucracy of an income from the difference between the world price for exported commodities and the price that the government fixes for the farmers. One recent study puts it clearly: "As a result of official policies on small-holder farming, especially price and marketing measures, no true rural 'bourgeoisie' has emerged in the Ivory Coast. Instead, there exists an economically blocked—and politically impotent—peasantry."⁶⁹

Two other major currents of social change deserve mention: the growth of school enrollments and the pattern of massive urbanization. Social expenditure in the post-1951 period included an expansion of spending on primary education, and enrollments for male children increased dramatically. Programs calling for educational expansion had been part of Houphouët's earliest electoral campaign in October 1945, and after 1951 this aspect of reform became pronounced. Enrollments in combined public and private education moved from 28,143 individuals in 1950 to 46,567 in 1954, a 65 percent increase in just four years. The rate of growth declined slightly, but the trend of increased enrollments continued dramatically well beyond independence. By 1964 there were 347,133 students enrolled, 72 percent of them in government schools.⁷⁰ Instruction was primarily based on language and basic numerical skills, and technical training was at a minimum. The result was that the implementation of the reforms of 1951 started creating a group of young school graduates whose training and expectations led them to believe that they were fit for salaried employment—most probably in government ranks.

69. Hecht, "The Ivory Coast," p. 26. For a more extended discussion of the problems of characterizing African economic elites as bourgeoisies see Paul M. Lubeck, "Introduction to the African Bourgeoisie: Debates, Methods and Units of Analysis," in Paul M. Lubeck, ed., *The African Bourgeoisie: Capitalist Development in Nigeria, Kenya and Ivory Coast* (forthcoming).

70. Messmer, *Rapport présenté*, pp. 291ff.; Ivory Coast. Direction de la Statistique, *Situation économique*, p. 195. For an overview of French educational policy throughout the colonial period, and an assessment of how the post-1945 reforms contrasted with the earlier policy, see Timothy C. Weiskel, "Education and Colonial Rule in French West Africa, 1890–1945," (thesis, Yale University, Scholar of the House Program, 1969); and Prosser Gifford and Timothy C. Weiskel, "African Education in a Colonial Context: French and British Styles," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (New Haven and London, 1971), pp. 633–711.

The expansion of spending on education was itself a substantial budgetary outlay, but by creating the expectation for government employment in the future it created an even bigger long-term problem of a burgeoning bureaucracy.

The second major social phenomenon engendered by the reforms of 1951 was the dramatic increase in urban populations both in Abidjan, the capital, and in towns in the interior. In part, this was a natural outcome of the geographic pattern of investments and public works. The port facilities inaugurated in 1951 and the public-works projects of road building and railroad extension led to the demand for wage labor and simultaneously created the means for people to come to town. In their desire for cheap manpower the administration also actively sought to encourage workers to enter the towns for wage employment. From 1947 onward arrangements were made to create cheap housing for Upper Volta migrants, and they were offered free train transportation to Abidjan. In 1951 the administration created the *Syndicat Interprofessionnel pour l'Acheminement de la Main d'Oeuvre* (SIAMO) to facilitate the arrival of manpower in this manner.

The results of this policy of the colonial government were staggering. In 1950 the total population of the Ivory Coast was estimated to be 2.17 million, of which 93 percent were located in rural villages. Abidjan itself accounted for a total African population at the time of only 55,000 people, or 2.5 percent of the country's total population. By 1960 the fruits of the colonial policy of encouraging urban migration registered themselves dramatically in the statistics. Abidjan's population in 1960 rose to a level of 180,000, while the colony's total population had risen to 3.23 million. Meanwhile, other towns in the interior rose from a total of 105,000 inhabitants in 1950 to 270,000 by 1960. This meant that while the colony as a whole had grown over the ten-year period at an average annual rate of 4.1 percent, the total urban population had increased at an average rate of 10.9 percent per annum. While the interior towns had averaged a growth rate of 9.9 percent each year during that period, Abidjan grew at a staggering rate of 12.6 percent each year from 1950 to 1960.

Such a pronounced trend in socio-economic transformation could not be reversed quickly. At one time engendered as an explicit policy by the colonial administration, the phenomenon of urban growth rapidly became a colonial legacy that did not reverse itself with independence. On the contrary, the average growth rate for Abidjan between 1960 and 1965 increased to 12.9 percent per year, while the overall urbanization rate for the country as a whole reached an astonishing annual average of 16.8 percent during these first five years of independence. It was not until the 1975–1980 period that the annual average rate of growth of the towns and cities dipped below the 7 percent level. During this period, the country as a whole was growing at a rate of 3

percent per annum, and the result is that there is still an enormous outflow of people from rural areas to towns and cities. Abidjan's population in 1980 stood at 1.105 million people, representing a full 17.5 percent of the country's total population. Including the towns in the interior, it was estimated that urban centers throughout the country, which accounted for only 7.3 percent of the population in 1950, contained 41.3 percent of the entire country's population by 1980, only three decades later.⁷¹

If the growth of rural-urban disparities fueled rural emigration, the growth and accentuation of regional disparities led to the heightened sense of regional ethnic identification. When "development projects" succeeded in being placed beyond the towns in the rural areas, accusations of political manipulation and ethnic favoritism inevitably emerged as certain regions were "developed" before others. When a hydro-electric dam was built at Kossou in the Baule region, for example, the administration of the project was placed under an organization known as the Agence pour l'Amenagement de Vallée du Bandama (AVB) (Agency for the Development of the Bandama Valley), but colloquially the AVB became known as the Agence des Voleurs Baoulés (Agency of Baule Thieves). Similarly, Houphouët's effort to transform his natal village of Yamoussoukro into the administrative capital of the Ivory Coast at great capital expense has been regarded as a flagrant example of ethnic favoritism by many who feel excluded. The system of administration that emerged from 1951 onward labeled at times "le Houphouëtisme" or "le système Houphouët-Boigny" is perceived locally as part of a pattern marked by the progressive "Baoulisation" of the country at large under the guise of a civic Ivoirian nationalism.

All of these transformations have been accomplished with an expanded European presence. Whereas in many African countries the achievement of independence led to the decline of a resident European population, the opposite was true in the Ivory Coast. This was largely the result of the expansion of the French personnel soon after independence in the newly created or rapidly growing educational institutions.⁷² By the 1970s this increased French presence combined with the growth of unemployed Ivory Coast school and university graduates led to major criticisms of the government and demands for reform.

All of these developments, then, can be seen to have been a continuous outgrowth of policies pursued by Houphouët in consort with the administration since 1951. The minister for planning in the first Ivory Coast government was Raphaël Saller, the very same individual who had provided Houphouët with the necessary introduction to the entourage of René Pleven in the sum-

71. Heather Joshi, Harold Lubell, and Jean Mouly, *Abidjan: Urban Development and Employment in the Ivory Coast* (Geneva, 1976), p. 100.

72. Coquery-Vidrovitch, "The Transfer of Economic Power," pp. 34ff.

mer of 1950. The declaration of "independence" as such on 7 August 1960 was not a very meaningful event in this continuum, for the significant choices had already been made. Not much room for maneuver remained for those who assumed the role of governing. The infrastructure of the country was irretrievably committed to expanding the age-old extractive *économie de traite*. As Suret-Canale summed it up:

While 1960 marked a rupture in the political domain, it did not do so in the economic domain; there was simply a continuation (and in some cases an acceleration) of the movements and trends already observable in the preceding period. . . . In this sense there was no "neocolonial" economy—unless one gives this expression the purely indicative meaning of postcolonial economy.⁷³

These developments in the Ivory Coast are in many ways unique to it alone because of its particular history, but as a developing country it nonetheless shares many of these salient problems with the rest of its African neighbors. The rapid rate of urbanization throughout the country has outstripped the country's capacity to produce foodstuffs, particularly since the colonial tendency to favor cash-crop production was extended well into the post-colonial period. What is more, the decline in the world commodity prices for exports like cocoa and coffee meant that the gains of the early boom years from 1951 through the early 1960s could not be sustained. Even by 1960 coffee and cocoa were assisted greatly by tropical timber as an earner of foreign exchange. As the prices for the former have failed to rise as fast as income needs, the Ivory Coast has fallen back on a straightforward economy of resource extraction through the exploitation of its tropical-forest timber for its foreign-exchange needs. More recently, since the early 1970s the Ivory Coast has discovered oil and natural gas, and this form of resource extraction will probably serve to stave off a deteriorating economic situation for a while to come. With oil as a resource it is possible to attract foreign investments and loans.

Compared to its neighbors, the Ivory Coast is indeed an economic "miracle," but its impressive achievements have all been within the context of accelerating its own rate of natural resource depletion. Moreover, in the short run, the boom conditions of the economy have encouraged a sizable immigration from neighboring regions. In the face of immigrant populations moving in from neighboring countries suffering from drought or economic disarray, the local populations in rural areas of the Ivory Coast are not well disposed to limit their own population growth, for to do so would be to cede effective control over the land. Population-control measures would be politically unpopular in these circumstances. In urban areas the influx of impoverished neighbors has led to the rise in crime and an increased sense of xenophobia.

73. J. Suret-Canale, "From Colonization to Independence," p. 463.

There are now signs that the miracle may well be a mirage. The economic conjunctures in the late 1970s and early 1980s led many Ivory Coast citizens to question the fundamental wisdom of "Houphouëtisme."⁷⁴ Given the highly personal nature of the regime and the particular skill Houphouët has employed in manipulating ethnic and regional factions to remain in power, it is perhaps inevitable that criticism of the current circumstances would take on a highly personal tone.

It is clear that the Ivory Coast, like its neighbors, is suffering from a growing international-debt burden, a burgeoning urban population, an increase in its food-import bills, a heightened sense of ethnic particularism, and a tragic rate of primary-resource depletion. This is happening elsewhere as well, and scholars are beginning to examine the continent as a whole in terms of "what went wrong."⁷⁵ How these questions are formulated and in what terms they are answered will determine policy that will govern Africa in the years to come. In the haste for answers it is important to avoid historical myopia. It is useful to keep in mind Fernand Braudel's insight about the *longue durée*:

Traditional history, with its concern for the short time span, for the individual and the event, has long accustomed us to the headlong, dramatic, breathless rush of its narrative. . . .

For the historian, accepting the *longue durée* entails a readiness to change his style, his attitudes, a whole reversal in his thinking, a whole new way of conceiving of social affairs . . . the whole of history is to be rethought, as if on the basis of an infrastructure.⁷⁶

Africa's ills do not date from independence in 1960. If we wish to examine "what went wrong," we shall need to look beyond the "breathless rush" of events surrounding the transfer of power. While it is possible, and maybe even fashionable, to lay the blame on recent regimes or particular individuals for current disasters in Africa, with the major trends of the *longue durée* in view, it would seem unwise to assign blame in too personal or too shortsighted a fashion. The Ivory Coast case stands as a sober reminder that whatever mistakes have occurred in policy planning since independence, the overall shape of contemporary circumstances needs to be understood as a natural outgrowth of the infrastructure installed and the policies pursued under European initiative and control throughout the colonial period and in an accelerated manner since 1951.

74. See particularly Laurent Gbagbo, *Côte d'Ivoire: pour une alternative démocratique* (Paris, 1983); Marcel Amondji, *Félix Houphouët et la Côte d'Ivoire: l'envers d'une légende* (Paris, 1984); and Pascal Koffi Teya, *Côte d'Ivoire: le roi est nu* (Paris, 1985).

75. See J. S. Whitaker, "The Policy Setting: Crisis and Consensus," in Robert and Jennifer Seymour Whitaker, eds., *Strategies for African Development* (Berkeley, 1986), pp. 4-9.

76. F. Braudel, *On History* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 27, 33.

15. *The Catastrophe of Belgian Decolonization*

ILUNGA KABONGO

I was twenty years old when, at the end of January 1960, we learned in the Congo that the country was to become independent by 30 June of that year. We were so surprised by the sudden Belgian decision to grant independence to its colony so quickly, after nearly a half-century of opposition to political progress, that we did not believe the story until we heard it directly from the leaders who had attended the round table in Brussels. They themselves were equally surprised, according to eyewitnesses, at the news of the Congo getting independence so soon. The announcement by the Belgian Government of the impending independence of the Congo was immediately followed at the round table by minutes of heavy silence instead of an outburst of joy.

To get an idea of the confusion and mystery surrounding the very term *independence*, one has only to remember that many leaders when reporting the proceedings of the round table to their followers made independence sound like a “thing” that was to be delivered mysteriously to the people of the Congo. One leader went so far as to ask his followers whether he could *show* them the “independence” he had brought back from Brussels. “No,” responded the crowd, for fear that an opposing group might take it away.

It is difficult today, twenty-five years later, to capture and describe the atmosphere of frantic agitation and expectations surrounding the process of the transfer of power in the then Belgian Congo. It was simply beyond words. “Independence” was wrapped in an atmosphere of religious, almost mystical, joy and apocalyptic expectation but at the same time of the most tragicomic misunderstandings and fears.

The overall feeling that independence was to usher in a paradisaical era of

freedom and prosperity was overshadowed by the fear on the part of many minority groups of a perpetual domination by local majority groups and by the feeling that somehow the white man was irreplaceable, even though there were going to be no more taxes and no more racial discrimination.

This chapter is about the origins of the process that led to the transfer of power in the Congo and its immediate consequences. It covers approximately the period from 1957 to 1965. Major events of the Congo drama are fairly well known today. What is often missing is a historical perspective and some critical assessments. I do feel that because of the timespan of twenty-five years since the beginning of the tragedy, it is easier to provide both today.

Guiding my account are the following theses: (1) Because the Belgians gave in when the struggle for independence had hardly begun to take shape, the weakness of the nationalist Congolese parties and the inexperience and youth of the leadership led to the fragmentation of the political space in such a sudden way that independence was nearly totally emptied of its meaning in a matter of weeks for the majority of the Congolese people. (2) The Belgians, being unable as a small power to control the pace of events in the Congo, were very quickly replaced by a congeries of external forces, dominated by the United States of America, which through the United Nations were able to tip the internal balance of forces against the real nationalists and in favor of the conservative leaders. In so doing, the United States contributed to the introduction of political violence in the political life of the Congo and to the repudiation of political accommodation and bargaining through the only body that legitimately represented the whole of the Congolese people, that is, the Parliament regularly elected in May 1960. Lumumba's murder and the irregular dismissal, twice in the period under consideration, of the Parliament constitute the climax of the process of political violence. It is this process that paved the way to the second coup d'état by Mobutu in November 1965. (3) The popular uprisings of 1963–1964 were the nationalist response to the loss of power and the subversion of the original meaning and aims of independence. Had not Western powers intervened once again in the internal affairs of the Congo, the nationalist Lumumbists would have emerged as the most decisive leading group in the Congo and true democracy might have eventually prevailed there.

In short, if any original sin is to be identified at the root of Zaire's current political illness, it is in the murder of Patrice Lumumba and his associates and in the early silencing of the elected parliamentary majority of 1960. And these events were directly or indirectly engineered by foreign Western intervention.

As for the Eastern bloc, its inexperience in the so-called third world and its logistical inability to stand up to the Western challenge in the Congo accounts

for the way Zaire was turned after its independence into a Western preserve, practically a neo-colony of the United States of America.

The United Nations was the medium through which Western influence exerted itself in the Congo. At no time, except for a few months when Dayal was its representative in the Congo, did it have a neutral stand vis-à-vis the internal affairs of the country.

The chapter is subdivided into three parts. First, we deal with the origins of the transfer of power characterized by hastiness and confusion on the part of the Belgians and boldness and immaturity on the part of the Congolese. Second, we see the immediate consequences of the transfer of power in the process of "Congolization," with the rise of the United States of America as the leading patron of Congolese politics. Last, we deal with the relative stabilization of the polity and the counterreaction of the nationalists through the popular uprisings.

ORIGINS OF THE TRANSFER OF POWER

Before 1955, practically no one spoke of or even thought of Congolese independence as a likely occurrence in the foreseeable future. The Belgians were more than satisfied by their fifty years of rule in the Congo, and as for the Congolese, they had not awakened to the wind of change that was sweeping across other countries of the continent.

The cardinal rule of Belgian policy was paternalism. As Bustin puts it:

It blindly assumed that political rights could be safely denied as long as social and economic needs were met and to a large extent, it succeeded in keeping the Congolese sufficiently interested in their material advance so that they were not overtly preoccupied with their political progress.¹

This means that when the winds of change began to blow in Africa, the Belgians were, of all the colonizers, the least prepared to have a clear alternative to colonial rule. Hence, where the British, the Portuguese, or the French had either decided to negotiate a settlement to their advantage or simply hang on by force, the Belgians ran into various contradictory policies. When they finally decided to hand over power to the nationalists, it was done with haste and very little preparation, in spite of King Baudouin's catch phrase that independence was to be given "without disastrous procrastination nor [sic] ill-advised haste."

1. Edouard Bustin, "The Congo," in Gwendolen Carter, ed., *Five African States/Responses to Diversity* (Ithaca, 1963), pp. 9-159, 33.

It also means that of all the African peoples the Congolese were the least prepared to run their country smoothly as an independent nation. The main reason is that the struggle for independence ended before there were enough experienced forces to run the country and a sufficiently mature leadership to lead the people.

The way events took shape, it seems as if the Belgians' attitude had been dictated by Machiavelli. If such an assertion seems unfounded, at least on the part of the Belgian government, some of the enlightened circles of the colonial administration surely could have foreseen what was likely to happen under the circumstances. Kalanda, for example, has documented the involvement of some colonial officials in Kasai in the Baluba-Lulua conflict, thus giving some credence to the Machiavellian thesis.² In any case, the suspicion of Machiavellianism was to be very high in the minds of many nationalists, especially Lumumba, after the mutiny of the army in July 1960 followed by the intervention of Belgian troops and the proclamation of the secession of Katanga.

What remains also true in retrospect is that the independence of the Congo had not *necessarily* to be proclaimed on 30 June 1960.

As a matter of fact, when in 1955 Professor Val Bilsen published a book in Belgium suggesting a thirty-year plan to decolonize the Congo, his ideas were more than welcomed in the évolués circles in the Congo. Most people among the Congolese elite thought of the book as a realistic timetable for decolonization. The manifesto known as the Manifesto of Conscience Africaine published in 1958 by a Congolese study group set up by catholic missionaries basically endorsed Van Bilsen's views. It was only when the ABAKO (Alliance des Bakongo), formed a few years earlier, came up with a counter manifesto advocating "immediate" independence that outbidding tactics were to lead to more and more statements in favor of swift independence.

Even then, how immediate that independence ought to be still varied very much among parties. Hence, for example, the first congress of Congolese parties organized by Lumumba's MNC (Mouvement National Congolais) in Luluabourg as late as April 1959 suggested January 1961 as the date for establishing a provisional government in the Congo leading to independence a few years later.

In retrospect, therefore, it seems that the Belgians had plenty of time to work out an acceptable scheme that would have set independence at the earliest for 1962 and at the latest for 1964.

Of course the Bakongo were agitating more than other groups and had set up a civil-disobedience campaign in 1959 to put more pressure on the Belgian government. But in retrospect it is not clear why Belgium decided to give in to

2. Mabika Kalanda, *Baluba et Lulua: une ethnie à la recherche d'un nouvel équilibre* (Brussels, 1960).

the agitation of the minority group instead of taking into consideration the wish of the majority of the Congolese people. It seems that the Bakongo's demagogic stance and outbidding tactics as to the timetable of independence were due to the fear this group had of becoming politically peripheral once enough time had been given to other Congolese groups to awaken themselves politically and organize.

In any case, after the Belgians had tried three ministers of colonies in a vain attempt to slow down the pace of change, a round table was called in Brussels to discuss the future of the Congo. There, once again, Kasa-Vubu tried to outsmart the other Congolese leaders by leaving the conference abruptly in order to put some more pressure on the Belgians. The fact that he was not followed in his move by the entire ABAKO delegation and especially by his vice president, Daniel Kanza, is a sign that Kasa-Vubu's demagoguery before independence was not always endorsed by his own party but was, rather, the result of personal ambitions.³ That move, however, made the other Congolese leaders even more intransigent, even though they did not always mean what they proclaimed in public. And in this atmosphere of outbidding tactics the Belgians gave in to an extent, as remarked earlier, that astonished even the Congolese leaders.⁴ Independence, not simply internal autonomy, was to be proclaimed on 30 June 1960.

Another issue that divided Congolese and Belgian opinion concerned the form of the future independent state, that is, federalism versus unitarism. Here, while ultra-militant concerning the pace of decolonization, the ABAKO aligned itself with the most conservative forces such as Tshombe's CONAKAT (Confédération des Associations des Natifs du Katanga) supported by white settlers in Katanga and claiming a federal state. The PNP (Parti National du Progrès) on the other hand, while manifestly conservative and pro-Belgian, shared with the nationalist Lumumbists a commitment to a united Congo.

As a consequence, at that early stage, it is not always easy to apply Nzongola's distinction between radical and conservative nationalism. In Nzongola's words,

the radicals were basically progressive nationalists who sought to create national or supraethnic mass-based parties, saw independence as an opportunity for some changes likely to benefit ordinary people and espoused non-alignment as their basic posture in international politics. [As for the conservatives,] they were nationalists who on the whole

3. Daniel Kanza, *The Rise and Fall of Patrice Lumumba: Conflict in the Congo* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

4. See Jean Stengers "Precipitous Decolonization: The Case of the Belgian Congo," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa* (New Haven and London, 1982), pp. 305-35.

tended to be more conservative in their political outlook than the radicals, [and] who were, therefore, to enjoy Western powers' sympathy and support.⁵

In this vein, only Lumumba's MNC and its major allies, CEREA (Centre de Regroupement Africain), PSA (Parti Solidaire Africain), and the Katangan Cartel, could be said to be radical, while the ABAKO in spite of its militant rhetoric turned out to be quite conservative.

General elections were organized in the Congo in May 1960, and Lumumba's MNC and its allies had a clear-cut majority over all the other parties. Regardless of this, the Belgian government appointed Kasa-Vubu to form the first Congolese government. It is only when Kasa-Vubu failed to aggregate a coherent anti-Lumumbist majority that the Belgians, reluctantly recognizing the facts, appointed Patrice Lumumba to set up a cabinet. Skillfully, Lumumba outmaneuvered his many opponents and succeeded in setting up a cabinet fully representative of the major political forces of the country, with the exception of Kalongi's wing of the MNC, which refused a seat in the cabinet.

The other major loser in this first round was Jean Bolikango, the leader of the Bangala, who had expected to become the first head of state of an independent Congo. Lumumba, in spite of dramatic pleas to the contrary, chose to support Kasa-Vubu mainly for fear that the Bakongo, a majority in the capital city, might riot were Kasa-Vubu not elected to this top position.

Along with a federal constitution, the Belgians had handed to the Congolese their brand of parliamentary democracy. The country was to be effectively run by the government headed by a prime minister, while the head of state was to be as passive as the Belgian monarch. Both arrangements turned out to be fatal for the new republic. The federal provisions of the constitution were to be used by Tshombe to proclaim Katanga's secession, and the two-headed nature of the executive branch was to give way to a power struggle between Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba.

On independence day there was not a single political group that had reasons purely to rejoice. The Lumumbists were certainly in control of the government, but they had included in it some of their arch-enemies for the sake of national unity. The Bakongo were happy because of Kasa-Vubu's position, but his constitutional powers were so weak that he could not really run the affairs of the country on a routine basis, and at the same time the Leopoldville province was under PSA rule, an ally of the Lumumbists.

We, the Baluba from Kasai living in Katanga, were perhaps in the worst

5. Nzongola Ntalaja, *Class Struggle and National Liberation in Africa* (Roxbury, Mass., 1982), pp. 65–66.

position. As members of the Cartel we partook in the Lumumbist victory in the central government, but in a Katanga bent on secession we were at the same time reminded of our status as "foreigners" in our country, even though there was a Luba representative of the MNC, Kalonji, in the Tshombe provincial cabinet. On the other hand, while rejoicing with the Lumumbist majority in the National Parliament we as Baluba could not escape a sense of overall defeat, because of the non-participation of Kalonji's MNC in the central government and of its defeat in the provincial government of Kasai.

It is in this atmosphere of mixed feelings and ambiguities that Lumumba clashed with King Baudouin. To the paternalistic speech of the latter praising his ancestry and his country for the tremendous achievements of the last eighty years, Lumumba responded by reminding his audience of the harsh discriminatory treatment given to the Congolese by the Belgian settlers and praised the struggle for independence. Belgians were outraged by what was essentially the truth, and despite Lumumba's reparatory speech later in the day, a cloud of suspicion and animosity was added to the already charged political climate.

To most political observers, Lumumba appeared already as a tragic figure in the drama that was to unfold before our eyes. Here was a young nationalist in his mid-thirties who, with titanic energy and skills, had succeeded in building in less than two years the only truly national party in the Congo amid the opposition of the colonial administration and the maneuvers of his local opponents to isolate him. Of all the Congolese leaders of the time, he was the only one to have a truly national and African stature and to understand what the struggle for national liberation was about.

But in the all-too-short struggle for independence, Lumumba had really no solid organization behind him. If his MNC was marginally superior to all the other Congolese political parties, both ideologically and organizationally, it could hardly prevail against the combined opposition of his local opponents and his enemies abroad. Second, Lumumba had no lieutenants of his stature who could help him or replace him in time of crisis. His own charisma was so great that his lieutenants kept drinking his words just like the rank and file members of his party and contributed very little to improving on his ideas and strategies. He was, therefore, very much a lonely leader adulated by the masses but with no conveyor belt to move and use systematically the immense capital of emotional and physical forces at his disposal. Furthermore, his stronghold being in the hinterland, he was in Kinshasa like a fish in unfriendly waters. Finally, the size of the government, the youth and inexperience of his colleagues, the diversity and opposition of interests represented in the cabinet in the name of national unity all meant that enemies were sitting side by

side in the same cabinet. And hanging, thanks to his constitutional power, like a Damoclean sword above all this was Kasa-Vubu, the head of the state: secretive, enigmatic, and over-ambitious.

In the light of all these considerations, it seems clear that Belgium's haste in granting independence to the Congo was the primary source of the Congo's early problems. It was a real gamble, and that gamble rested on the assumption that there would not be a major disturbance of public order immediately after independence. Realistically, in a country with as many contradictions as existed in the Congo in 1960, the gamble had no objective prospect for success.

THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRANSFER OF POWER

In the early morning of 6 July 1960 began the long process of the Congo crisis. The army mutinied, prompted by General Jansens's provocation when he gathered the soldiers in a camp in Leopoldville to tell them that for them, as far as he was concerned, independence would not bring any change in their condition. He wrote on a blackboard in front of the gathering of the soldiers: "After independence = before independence." In a matter of days, the mutiny spread to the other barracks throughout the country and soldiers began molesting black citizens as well as white. As long as it was under Belgian rule, the Congolese army had stood up as a united and disciplined body maintaining public order. Now that the colonial order was over, no cement could any longer hold it as a united and reliable force.

Many contradictions were at work that explain the mutiny of the army. The first was the contempt in which the soldiers held all the Congolese civilians. During their rule, the Belgians, in a policy of divide and rule, had inoculated that contempt in the mind of the Congolese soldiers, making them consider their civilian kin as barbarians and savages ("Basenji") who constantly had to be checked by violence. Now with independence, the soldiers saw the most troublesome of the "barbarians" catapulted to the top of the society and they, the "civilized," were to pay them honors, just as they used to do with the white colonial officials. This was hardly acceptable to the rank and file of the army, and very few soldiers had made the necessary adjustment to the new situation.

Combined with this major contradiction were political contradictions of more recent origin. On the one hand, those among the Congolese soldiers who had been listening to nationalist speeches were suspicious of Belgian sincerity in granting independence to the Congo. On the other hand, those among the soldiers who were not particularly enthusiastic about independence were resentful of both the Belgians and the Congolese leaders. Finally,

tribal considerations split the army into inimical factions, the Bakongo versus the Bangala, the Batetla versus the Baluba, and so forth.

The combination of all these contradictions and Jansen's claim that no change would come to the condition of the soldiers after independence resulted in contradictory action of the soldiers during the mutiny. In some barracks they put their Belgian officers in jail and spread out from the barracks in search of weapons among the European settler community. In other instances in Leopoldville they were after Lumumba and his ministers while molesting Congolese according to their tribal or political affiliation.

Finally they were moved by all kinds of rumors spread by Machiavellian voices, such as that the country was being invaded by Russian soldiers.⁶

The situation got out of control in most places, and Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba had to fly from place to place to try to restore peace and order. But on 10 July, in violation of the Friendship Treaty and uninvited by the Congolese government, the Belgian government unilaterally intervened militarily in the Congo. Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu reacted by asking, at the U.S. ambassador's suggestion, for the intervention of the United Nations to restore law and order. Two days later, Gizenga and Bomboko, without consulting Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu, requested from Ambassador Timberlake two thousand American troops. Lumumba later denounced their move and together with Kasa-Vubu made a second request to the United Nations, this time not only to reestablish order but to put an end to the Belgian aggression.

On 14 July, after they had been ridiculed by Belgian refugees at the airport and had been refused permission to land in Elisabethville, under the control of the Belgian troops, Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba broke off diplomatic relations with Belgium. They then proceeded, still together, to appeal to the Soviet Union to intervene to stop Western aggression against the Congo. That move, to which Krushchev responded rather vaguely, reinforced Western suspicion against Lumumba. From then on in Western chanceries he was described as a Communist and was suspected of having fomented the troubles in the Congo in order to make room for Soviet intervention. The fact that he was acting with Kasa-Vubu was simply set aside, and Western diplomats preferred to regard Kasa-Vubu as Lumumba's hostage. However, there was even then, at this early time in the crisis, a Belgian attempt to eliminate both Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba. Indeed, according to Van den Bosch, on 14 July the Belgian pilot who was to fly both men to Stanleyville was given instructions to climb the aircraft to five thousand meters and put on his oxygen mask without providing masks for Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba. The pilot did just

6. Jean Van den Bosch, *Journal d'une ambassade dramatique: les quarantes jours du pre-Zaire ou le cordon mal coupé*. Partial publication of a forthcoming book.

that, but the two Congolese leaders survived, and the plane came back to Leopoldville, the pilot pretending a radio failure.⁷

On 15 July the first U.N. troops arrived in Leopoldville. It is clear today that the way the whole U.N. operation started was masterminded by Washington and Western powers to isolate the Soviet Union and its allies, as well as African radical countries such as Guinea, and to make sure that the Eastern powers would have no influence in the Congo.⁸

As for the American role in the whole operation, it was at many crucial times decisive. The first U.N. representative, Ralph Bunche, was an American, and later on another American, Andrew Cordier, was to play a critical role in violation of the political neutrality that the United Nations was claiming in its whole intervention in the Congo.

Another serious matter at this juncture was the attitude of the U.N. forces vis-à-vis the Katanga secession. Everything was done to make sure that the U.N. intervention would not lead to the central government recapturing control of the secessionist province. Had the United Nations immediately entered Katanga and removed the Belgian troops, Tshombe would not have consolidated his position and the secession would literally have been concluded overnight. Instead, it was going to take more than two years characterized by half-measures, hesitations, and compromises of all sorts that ended costing the life of Premier Lumumba and even of Dag Hammarskjöld, the U.N. secretary-general.

On 17 July Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba, still acting together, issued an ultimatum threatening to ask the Soviet Union to intervene if the United Nations did not remove all Belgian troops from the Congo by midnight on 19 July. This move prompted the beginning of misunderstanding and mistrust between the U.N. officers and the Lumumba government, even though the United States put pressure on Belgium to announce officially the withdrawal of its troops. It also sealed Lumumba's fate as far as Western powers were concerned. The CIA described him as another Castro or even "worse" than Castro, and the American ambassador in Belgium, Burden, made a recommendation that was to be the cardinal guiding principle of the United States' attitude toward Lumumba for the future:

Only prudent, therefore, to plan on basis that Lumumba government threatens our vital interest in the Congo and Africa generally. A principal objective of our political and diplomatic action must therefore be to *destroy* Lumumba government as now constituted, but at the same time

7. Ibid., p. 6.

8. Madeleine Kalb, *Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York, 1982), pp. 17ff.

we must find or *develop* another horse to back which would be acceptable in rest of Africa and defensible against Soviet political attack.⁹ (My emphasis.)

Gizenga and Kashamura were also particularly singled out as Soviet agents. From then on, Western powers concentrated on breaking off the ties between Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba and on finding ways of removing Lumumba from office by any means. The Belgians were probably the first to act along these lines. Van den Bosch tells us of their efforts in the troubled days of July to get Lumumba dismissed and replaced by the openly pro-Belgian stooge, Foreign Minister Bomboko. A man named André Wandelen was sent from Brussels to Leopoldville to explore such a possibility but, finding Lumumba still strong, he returned empty handed.¹⁰

Lumumba's trip to the United States and his attempt to get, on a bilateral basis, U.S. help failed to win him Western support. Instead, he was considered after his meetings with top officials at the State Department as "irrational" and "unreliable." Among other things, the fact that he did not look straight into the eyes of the persons he was speaking to made one official report that "this was an individual whom it was impossible to deal with."¹¹

Two sets of events were to precipitate Lumumba's fate. First, his clash with the U.N. secretary-general, Hammarskjöld, over the Katanga issue and, second, his attempt to invade Katanga through the Kasai province with the help of a Soviet airlift operation.

Lumumba was angered by the way Hammarskjöld handled the entry of U.N. troops in Katanga. Not only did Hammarskjöld not take officials of the central government with the troops, but he deliberately refused to consult with Lumumba before the operation, negotiating instead directly with Tshombe. Finally, he made sure that no troops from countries friendly to the Lumumba government entered Katanga. As a result only white troops from Western Europe were employed in this first move to Katanga.

From this clash between Lumumba and Hammarskjöld, the United States and their allies concluded that if the U.N. operation was to continue Lumumba had to disappear from the scene altogether.

The second series of events that precipitated Lumumba's fate was his attempt to invade Katanga through Kasai with Soviet help. The operation, started in August 1960, ran into difficulties in Kasai where Kalonji's supporters resisted their advance. As a consequence, the troops opened fire and killed about two hundred civilians who had taken refuge in a church. The

9. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

10. Van der Bosch, *Journal*, p. 8.

11. Kalb, *Congo Cables*, p. 37.

whole affair was grossly exaggerated and presented in the media as genocide directed against the Luba people. Thus, American and Belgian officials in the Congo as well as anti-Lumumbist Congolese stepped up their siege on Kasa-Vubu to get him to dismiss Lumumba.

The combined effort of all these people bore fruit at the beginning of September. Indeed, on 5 September Kasa-Vubu, ending his enigmatic silence, came out of his self-imposed seclusion to dismiss Lumumba officially from his position as prime minister.

Lumumba in turn reacted by "revoking" Kasa-Vubu as head of state. The contest between Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu was decisively affected by Andrew Cordier's decision to close all the airports and the radio, which were under U.N. custody. While Kasa-Vubu could have access to radio Brazzaville on the other side of the Congo River, Lumumba was denied all means to plead his case with the public and mobilize his supporters throughout the country. Madeleine Kalb assures us that Andrew Cordier, an American diplomat standing in for the U.N. representative in the Congo, had acted not only on his own, probably with the American ambassador's support, but that "the key factor in Cordier's analysis of the situation—a factor which he did not stress publicly at the time—was the Soviet angle. He was greatly disturbed by the inroads the Russians had made in the Congo, especially compared to the slight impact made by the United States."¹²

However, the fact that Cordier had over-valued Russian influence in the Congo was evident to such moderate leaders as Joseph Ipeo, an anti-Lumumbist, who had found Cordier "astonishingly naive" about the Russian game in the Congo.¹³

On the other hand, Kasa-Vubu's action was clearly illegal. If, according to the letter of the constitution, the president had the power to remove the prime minister from office with the counter-signature of two ministers at least, he could not, however, do so in practice if the prime minister still had the confidence of Parliament. And Lumumba had the majority of Parliament behind him. As a matter of fact, on 7 September the Lower Chamber voted sixty to nineteen to annul both Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba's reciprocal revocations. The Senate for its part gave full support to Lumumba by a vote of forty-one to two. And on 13 September meeting in joint session, both Houses of Parliament voted eighty-eight to twenty-five to give special powers to Lumumba.

Constitutionally overwhelmed, Kasa-Vubu chose nonetheless to persist in his coup d'état. On 14 September he adjourned Parliament for a month, claiming that it had acted illegally.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

To consolidate Kasa-Vubu's position, Mobutu stepped in on the same day, claiming to "neutralize" both Kasa-Vubu and Lumumba. But as subsequent developments would show, he had in fact, on American advice, staged his coup d'état against Lumumba rather than against both Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu. He immediately appointed a group of young graduates from the university to run the country. In a second move, he expelled from the Congo all Russian and Czech diplomats. Krushchev swallowed his temporary defeat. As Madeleine Kalb notes, he "did not have enough forces in the Congo to defeat the combined power of the U.N. and the Western countries."¹⁴

But Lumumba's removal from office was not enough for the Americans. For the CIA, he had to be removed permanently and physically eliminated. A man was sent to this effect from Paris on 26 September with poison to be administered to Lumumba in his food or toothpaste.¹⁵ The CIA man never had a chance to carry out his mission. Instead, Lumumba was to be killed in Elisabethville on 17 January 1961 after being captured, thanks to CIA air support, as he was heading by road toward his stronghold in Stanleyville.

Lumumba's followers, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Gizenga, had succeeded in fleeing to Stanleyville, where they set up a government claiming to be the only legitimate government of the Congo. They were to be recognized by the Soviet Union and its allies as well as by the radical African governments of Guinea, Ghana, Morocco, Mali, and the United Arab Republic.

Hence the immediate consequences of the transfer of power in the Congo were chaos, followed by the elimination of the Lumumbist majority from power and the physical elimination of their leader as well as the splitting of the country into three centers of power: Leopoldville, Stanleyville, and Elisabethville.

These developments had been made possible thanks mainly to intervention by the West, especially the United States, and the latter directly or through the United Nations had emerged as the new patron of Congolese politics. Manipulations, illegalities of all kinds, and finally political violence were the means through which this position was acquired. In retrospect, it seems that a more genuine attempt on the part of the United States to work with Lumumba would have been a much wiser course of action, besides being consistent with professed American ideals of anti-colonialism and democracy.

Lumumba was not a Communist, nor was his MNC coalition a Communist party or anything close to that. Robinson McIlvaine, deputy chief of mission in Leopoldville, may have come close to the truth when he cabled the State Department on July 26: "Lumumba is an opportunist and not a communist.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 101-02.

His final decision as to which camp he will eventually belong will not be made by him but rather will be imposed upon him by outside forces.”¹⁶ And Colin Legum’s remarks made in 1980 could have applied as well to Lumumba’s Cabinet:

Those who characterize African governments or movements as being pro-Western or pro-Soviet almost always do so out of a failure to understand why certain African leaders, governments or movements find it useful to choose a particular foreign ally at a particular point in time. These relationships are largely transient, both because most African governments are shortlived and because the central thrust of continental politics (despite some aberrations) is still toward non-alignment.¹⁷

Lumumba was concerned about the Belgian military intervention and the Katanga secession, both processes that the United States ultimately helped put to an end. The reason it chose to do so without Lumumba rather than with him seems to lie in the hysterical and irrational fear of Communism by a few men rather than in an intelligent and rational political choice. The four hundred and fifty Soviet and Czech personnel in the Congo in 1960 could hardly have outweighed the thousands of Western and pro-Western troops present in the U.N. forces in the Congo. Nor could the few Communist advisers such as Madame Blouin or Serge Michel around Gizenga turn the entire Congo Communist.

As for Lumumba, he seems to have made a few fatal mistakes that only youth and inexperience could account for. First, by agitating the spectrum of Soviet intervention without making sure that it would be forthcoming effectively in time of need he scared Western powers, especially Washington, to a point he did not seem to have been aware of. Nor did he seem to have been aware of the logistical and political difficulties involved in such an operation. Second, Lumumba seemed to have unduly miscalculated the weakness of his internal opponents. The trust he put in Kasa-Vubu and Mobutu turned against him in decisive moments. Kasa-Vubu did not hesitate to revoke him unconstitutionally, nor Mobutu to stage a coup d’etat against him. Third, though he was right in perceiving at that early stage the collusion of the U.N. secretary-general with Western powers and the very forces he was fighting, he made the mistake of attacking both simultaneously and impetuously. Had he followed Nkrumah’s advice of playing for time in dealing with enemies his fate might have been altogether different.

Maybe, as his last letter to his wife suggests, he might have been aware all

16. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

17. Colin Legum, “African Outlooks Towards the USSR,” in David E. Albright, ed., *Communism in Africa* (Bloomington, 1980), p. 15.

along of the unequal nature of the struggle and have chosen in cold blood to be the martyr of the African liberation rather than its victorious warrior.

As for the Soviet Union, if it seems difficult to accept Dallin's claim that it was not willing to commit more than verbal support to the radical nationalist cause, it remains however true that Krushchev's rather impressionistic approach to "third world" problems and his failure to deliver in time of crisis did not help the credibility of the USSR vis-à-vis the cause of African liberation.¹⁸

But if there is a power to blame, it is certainly Belgium, which failed to handle responsibly the nationalist challenge in the first place and resorted to a policy of force and double-dealing (especially in Katanga) once colonial rule had ended. The sensationalism in the Belgian media about alleged atrocities against Belgian subjects in the Congo is what created, in the first place, a climate ripe for irrational behavior on the part of Western powers as well as the legitimate response of the Congolese leaders.

THE SEARCH FOR AN "ACCEPTABLE HORSE"

The next episode in the consequences of the transfer of power was to be the search for a legitimate government over the Congo after the breaking up of the Lumumba cabinet.

This episode may be subdivided into two major parts. The first extends from January 1961 to the end of 1963 and the second from the end of 1963 to November 1964. In the first period, the search for the alternative "horse" by the Americans after Lumumba's murder led to the setting up of the Adoula cabinet in August 1962 and to the Lumumbists' attempt to regain power by constitutional means. In the second period, having failed because of Kasa-Vubu's second *coup de force* against Parliament, the Lumumbists resorted to violent means. They would be stopped from taking over the country only by a blatant intervention of Western powers in November 1964. A year later, at the instigation of his American mentors, Mobutu would step in once again, this time to take power for himself indefinitely.

As we have seen, after Lumumba's murder, the country was divided between three centers of power, each one enjoying external support: the Americans in Leopoldville; the Soviet camp in Stanleyville; and Belgium, Great Britain, and France in Katanga. Kalonji's South Kasai was simply an appendage of and a buffer zone for Katanga.

By mid-January 1961, forces loyal to Lumumba controlled, under the leadership of Gizenga, nearly half of the Congo territory. The Leopoldville government with Kasa-Vubu as the major leader had control only over the

18. Alexander Dallin, "The Soviet Union: Political Activity," in Zbigniew Brzezinski, ed., *Africa and the Communist World* (Stanford, 1963), pp. 3-48, 32.

Leopoldville province and the equatorial province. As for Katanga, the control of Tshombe's forces was limited to the southern part of the province, the north, in rebellion against Tshombe's rule, being practically controlled by Lumumbist forces.

In order to contain the military advances of the Lumumbist forces, an alliance was made between Kasa-Vubu, Tshombe, and Kalonji, even though the two latter were in open rebellion against the central government. In spite of this agreement, contradictions existed between these pro-Western leaders that Kasa-Vubu sought to solve through extra-constitutional means. He convened three round tables, first in Leopoldville, then in Tananarive, and finally in Coquilhatville.¹⁹

Tshombe, who did not attend the first meeting, practically dominated the Tananarive round table, where he succeeded in imposing on his pro-Western associates a confederal type of framework to solve the Congo's problem. At the last round table, in Coquilhatville, he was finally arrested and transferred to Leopoldville, where Kasa-Vubu and his associates put pressure on him to end the Katanga secession. He was released by Mobutu, and as soon as he got back to Elisabethville he disclaimed all the promises he had made in Leopoldville.

In the meantime, the Americans having finally realized that no political solution would be forthcoming in the Congo without a meeting of Parliament, and to avert the threat of a military victory by the Lumumbists, arranged through the United Nations a meeting of Parliament at Lovanium. Contradictions in the Lumumbist camp, especially between Gizenga and Gbenye, coupled with a blockage of the Eastern province by the Leopoldville government, led to the acceptance of the meeting of Parliament by the Lumumbists. Gizenga did not, however, personally attend the meeting, despite Russian pressure at this end. At this juncture, Linner, the U.N. representative in the Congo, working closely with the American ambassador and setting aside his so-called neutrality, "meddled," in his own terms, in the internal affairs of the Congo. He approached Kasa-Vubu to "tell him that there were times in a country's history when its great leaders must enter the political arena, as de Gaulle had done in France, and that Kasa-Vubu must demonstrate his leadership by going to Lovanium and guiding the politicians towards a satisfactory outcome—a government headed by Adoula."²⁰ He went further than that. "He offered Kasa-Vubu a helicopter so that he could go back and forth easily, and urged him to listen to the advice of the U.N. officials and the Americans to keep 'daily or even hourly contact' with him."²¹

19. For developments about the conflicts among the pro-Western leaders, see Ntalaja, *Class Struggle*, pp. 68–70.

20. Kalb, *Congo Cables*, p. 272.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 272–73.

Most probably Linner or the Americans must have provided Kasa-Vubu with the necessary cash to persuade hesitant members of Parliament eventually to vote for the American "horse." In any case, Kasa-Vubu followed the advice, and by 2 August a cabinet headed by the moderate pro-Western Cyrille Adoula was approved by Parliament in a nearly unanimous vote. In spite of this pro-Western victory, the re-election a few days earlier of Joseph Kasongo, a Lumumbist, as Speaker of the lower House had shown that the Lumumbists were still a force to be reckoned with in Congolese politics. Besides, Gizenga was appointed deputy prime minister and a few Lumumbists given ministerial positions, including the critical Ministry of the Interior (Home Affairs), held by Gbenye.

The next round of American diplomacy was essentially aimed at strengthening Adoula and making sure that he would not be overwhelmed by the Lumumbists present in his cabinet, especially Gizenga. They were also very much aware that if Adoula failed to end the Katanga secession, the Lumumbists would have an easy task in discrediting Adoula and ousting him altogether. Then the threat of a new Soviet intervention would once again hang over the Congo.

Gizenga was rather easily disposed of. He lacked Lumumba's charisma and political skills and made the task against him easier by going back to Stanleyville in October 1961, where he ousted the legal provincial government and showed signs of resetting a third center of power. His action alienated him even from his Lumumbists associates in the central government, and after a mutiny of troops under his command in Kindu and the murder of thirteen Italian airmen, he was censured by Parliament on 15 January 1961 by a vote of sixty-seven to one, with four abstentions. He was dismissed the following day as deputy prime minister and later jailed on the remote island of Bula Bemba.

As for the Katanga secession, it took the Americans more than two years to resolve it finally by force. Before that, half-measures and hesitations characterized the U.N. attitude vis-à-vis Katanga. An attempt to put an end to the secession in September 1961 ended in disaster, followed by the death of Hammarskjöld at Ndola. He was on his way, under Western pressure, to meet with Tshombe in order to arrange for a ceasefire.

Up to his removal in 1964, Adoula, the American horse, never turned out to be a very strong leader. He never commanded a big following among the masses nor a leadership position among his peers. Rather, he was a prisoner of the Binza group, comprising Mobutu, Nendaka, Kandolo, Ndele, and Bomboko, who were respectively in control of the army, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Central Bank, and the Foreign Ministry.²² These individuals,

22. Ntalaja, *Class Struggle*, p. 67.

none of whom (with the exception of Bomboko) had any elected mandate, constituted the real government of the Congo during this period. They were in close contact with the American ambassador and the CIA to such a point that Weisman concluded that the American government "not only supported Adoula; it was, in many different ways, part of his government."²³

After Gizenga's removal from public life the other nationalists in the Adoula Cabinet were harassed one by one and eliminated from their positions. Parliament, still including a substantial Lumumbist representation, began demanding the release of Gizenga from jail less for the sake of Gizenga personally than for his value as the symbol of nationalist aspirations. In September 1963 Kasa-Vubu illegally dissolved Parliament, therefore compelling most Lumumbist leaders to become clandestine. Many of them crossed the Congo River and took refuge in Brazzaville, where the conservative government of Fulbert Youlou had been overthrown earlier that year by a popular uprising.²⁴ From there they set up the CNL (Comité de Liberation Nationale), an organization aiming at overthrowing by force the corrupt and pro-American regime in Leopoldville.

They found the populace in the Congo deeply alienated from the puppet regime and longing for a "second independence." Mulele organized the bush in the Kwilu province, and Gbenye and Soumialot went to the eastern region. While the Mulele revolutionary movement was more organized both politically and ideologically, it was contained before it could spread to a wider area. As for the Eastern branch of the revolutionary movement, it was much more successful militarily, though lacking in political and ideological strength.

By August 1964 Stanleyville had fallen to the revolutionary forces, and a People's Republic was proclaimed. Mobutu's army was completely incapable of stopping the advance of the revolutionary forces, which allied the use of modern weaponry with magical practices, having the most damaging effects on the morale of Mobutu's soldiers.

Tshombe, who had returned from exile in June 1964 and replaced Adoula as premier, used mercenaries and the remnants of the Katanga gendarmes to try to crush the revolutionary movement. He eventually succeeded, thanks to the open and direct military intervention of Western powers. Indeed, on 24 November 1964 a combined Belgo-American operation was launched from the air to recapture the city of Stanleyville. From then on, the revolution, having lost its direction, receded, and the Leopoldville government recaptured the two-thirds of the national territory that the revolutionary forces had been able to control.

23. Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1900-1964* (Ithaca, 1974), p. 208.

24. Ntalaja, *Class Struggle*, pp. 53-54.

After their military victory over the Lumumbists, the pro-Western leaders in Leopoldville involved themselves in political feuds among themselves. Kasa-Vubu and Tshombe were both to contest the presidential election scheduled for the end of 1965, when, on 24 November 1965, Mobutu made his second coup d'état against both and took power for himself. He has been in power ever since.

CONCLUSION

The history of the transfer of power and its consequences in the Congo is probably the most dramatic of the transfers in contemporary Africa. The most salient features of this dramatic process begin with Belgian action.

Belgium cannot escape the historical responsibility for having set up an irresponsible pace of change. By entangling herself in a web of contradictory policies when the issue of decolonization was raised in the Congo, she became a prisoner of a process of outmatching demands made by a few impatient Congolese leaders that was to accelerate the pace of change to a speed no one really wanted. That is why independence came as a surprise to most Congolese in June 1960. Belgium's second mistake was her unilateral military intervention in July 1960 and the support she lent to the Katanga secession. After all, once the first moment of panic following the mutiny of the Force Publique had passed, Belgians were in no greater danger in the Congo than they had been throughout the colonial era. As a matter of fact the real casualties of the mutiny did not go beyond the loss of ten lives and the physical and emotional harassment of a few hundred people, at most, out of a total of about a hundred thousand Belgian settlers.

Besides, the Belgian ambassador in Leopoldville, as his memoirs show, was opposed to this late policy of force and to the way the whole intervention took place. It seems in retrospect that the emotionalism of a public opinion which up to that point was very little concerned with the affairs of the colony is the key factor explaining Belgium's erratic behaviour.

The second salient feature is the atmosphere of cold war that was suddenly cast on Congolese politics, making both Lumumba and his American foes prisoner of a certain line of thinking.

Lumumba gave too much attention to the involvement of foreign powers in his behalf to help him deal with the Belgian intervention and the Katanga secession. Instead, he should have concentrated on solidifying his own internal power and played for time in dealing with the challenges confronting him. More serenity and calculation in his game would have brought him sooner or later the results he was so eagerly seeking.

As for the Americans, they also bear an important historical responsibility

for their constant and decisive intervention in the internal affairs of the young republic. The almost visceral anti-communism of most officials who were dealing with the Congo led them to twist the internal balance of forces in the Congo in favor of less democratically representative forces and against democratically strong leaders just because the latter were genuine nationalists. It is a miracle that, in so doing, they did not end up throwing the nationalist forces into the arms of the Communists and compelling them to turn Communist. This fact, however, only shows that the Lumumbists were nothing more than authentic nationalists committed to the ideal of African liberation and non-alignment.

Lastly, as for the Congolese themselves, victims of a fate that their own action had unleashed on them, they of course bear the responsibility of their immaturity as a nation. Only history will tell who among them was hero or traitor.

16. *Kenya: The Road to Independence and After*

BETHWELL A. OGOT AND
TIYAMBE ZELEZA

To imperialist historians decolonization, or, to use their favorite term, the *transfer of power*, was a prescient, preemptive policy developed in London or Paris during the Second World War for a variety of reasons, but not in response to the mounting nationalist tide in Africa itself. In other words, decolonization was planned after all; nationalism was merely of nuisance value. For nationalist historians this represents diabolical historical perfidy, an unashamed attempt to deny the primacy of nationalism in the decolonization drama, that independence was not granted, but achieved, if not grabbed.¹

Both approaches simplify the process of decolonization, treating the attainment of independence at the turn of the sixties as if it were a foregone conclusion by 1945. In these accounts the conflicts, hesitations, and uncertainties that littered the winding road to independence are often subsumed into an inevitable consummation of either imperial planning or nationalist militancy. Moreover, this unfolding saga is rarely predicated on the changing material conditions in both the imperial and colonial territories, a consideration of which would unravel the social content of independence, thereby

1. Among the more recent "imperialist" works on decolonization see A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ed., *The Transfer of Power: The Colonial Administration in the Age of Decolonization* (London, 1979); W. H. Morris-Jones and G. Fischer, eds., *Decolonization and After: The British and French Experience* (London, 1980); D. J. Morgan, *The Official History of Colonial Development*, vols. 1-5, particularly vol. 5; *Guidance towards Self-Government in British Colonies* (New Jersey, 1980); J. M. Lee and M. Petter, *The Colonial Office, War and Development* (London, 1982); P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940-1960* (New Haven and London, 1982).

tempering imperial self-congratulation or smug regret and nationalist euphoria and subsequent disillusionment.

THE DECLINE OF SETTLER POWER

In 1945 there was little to indicate that Kenya would be independent in eighteen years' time. The settlers had in fact never been more powerful. Circumstances during the war had conspired to increase settler prosperity and political power. The Colonial Office could only watch, almost impotently, as the settlers assumed control of the executive instruments of the colonial government and extended the use of the East African Governors' Conference to control the East African situation as far as possible.² The prospects of the settlers realizing their long-cherished dream of turning Kenya into a "White Man's Country" looked frightfully close. After the war, they lost no time in trying to institutionalize their wartime advances.

But the war also generated material conditions that fueled nationalist unrest. There was, in addition, the resurgence of some of the gross forms of political control reminiscent of the early decades of colonial rule. Labor conscription, forced cultivation of certain crops, shortages of food, consumer goods, and housing, spiraling inflation, falling real wages—all afflicted like a plague the rural hinterlands as well as the rapidly growing colonial towns with their fledgling import-substitution industries. No wonder the six years of the war witnessed labor and rural unrest of unprecedented proportions.³

It is indicative of the charged circumstances that new and decidedly more militant organizations emerged during the war. In the western province Dini Ya Musambwa was formed in the early years of the war. The Dini Ya Musambwa was a movement that sought to reassert African religious autonomy and provide for political protest, and doubled as a nascent trade union. Missionaries, government officials, African chiefs, soil-conservation officers, Indian and European employers, all became the object of the Dini Ya Musambwa's wrath and violence.⁴

In the Central Province, the region where colonial capitalism had pene-

2. John Flint, "Last Chance for the White Man's Country: Constitutional Plans for Kenya and East Africa, 1938-1943," unpublished paper, history seminar, Dalhousie University, Feb. 1982; also see Ian Spencer, "Settler Dominance, Agricultural Production and the Second World War in Kenya," *Journal of African History* 21, 4 (1980).

3. See P. T. Zeleza, "Dependent Capitalism and the Making of the Kenya Working Class during the Colonial Period," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1982, chap. 3; and A. Clayton and U. C. Savage, *Government and Labour in Kenya, 1895-1963* (London, 1974), chap. 6.

4. G. S. Were, "Politics, Religion and Nationalism in Western Kenya," in B. A. Ogot, ed., *Politics and Nationalism in Colonial Kenya* (Nairobi, 1972).

trated furthest in Kenya, squatter and peasant resistance manifested itself in the sabotage of crops and farm machinery, the maiming and killing of cattle on settler farms, and refusal to follow government agricultural conservation regulations. The Mau Mau movement would grow out of this squatter and peasant revolt. It was in this atmosphere that the Kenya African Union (KAU) was formed in 1944. It would articulate the traditional demands for African political representation, land reform, improved economic and educational opportunities, abolition of *kipande* and the color bar, with greater assertiveness than ever before.⁵ Nor were political consciousness and agitation restricted to these regions. They were also manifest among peoples like the coastal Mijikenda, who, since the suppression of the Giriama Rising of 1914, were assumed by the colonial authorities to have become politically apathetic. The formation of the Mijikenda Union in 1945 belied such cozy assumptions.⁶ No less symptomatic of the times was the stridency with which the Indian Congress called for repeal of discriminatory legislation and, more important, there was Congress's collaboration with KAU in resisting settler entrenchment of the status quo, despite considerable anxiety among many Indians as to what African nationalism would eventually portend for them.⁷

The ground beneath the settlers was also shifting in the least likely places. The war had laid the roots of import-substitution industrialization in Kenya, an enterprise that expanded rapidly after the war mostly under the aegis of multinational and Asian capital, thus accelerating the decline of settler economic hegemony. Indeed, unlike the war and prewar periods, public expenditure was no longer predominantly earmarked for settler production. Thus, although there was an increase in absolute terms, there was a relative decline in the amount of capital formation attributed to settler agriculture and a corresponding rise of capital formation directed into industry and other non-settler farming sectors. By the mid-1950s the articulation of foreign and African capital would be well under way.⁸

It is evident that, in addition to obvious increases in the overall numbers of workers, industrial growth after the war led to significant changes in the composition and distribution of the labor force that, in turn, laid firmer foundations for labor organization and activism. Postwar living and working con-

5. G. S. Rosberg and J. Nottingham, *The Myth of "Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya* (New York, 1966); and B. Kaggia, *Roots of Freedom* (Nairobi, 1975).

6. C. Brantley, *The Giriama and British Colonialism: A Study in Resilience and Rebellion, 1800-1920* (Berkeley, 1981); and R. M. Mambo, "Colonial Rule and Political Activity among the Mijikenda of Kenya's Coast to 1960," unpublished paper, history staff seminar, Kenyatta University College, Nov. 1980.

7. D. A. Seidenberg, *Uhuru and the Kenya Indians* (New Delhi, 1983).

8. Nicola Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977* (London, 1980).

ditions in the burgeoning industrial centers of Nairobi and Mombasa provided a sure recipe for labor militancy. Wages were as low as ever, housing short, and rents high; the slums of Nairobi and Mombasa expanded with a vengeance. And mass unemployment began.⁹

Meanwhile, the festering agrarian question came to a head. Despite long-standing settler and government efforts, African accumulation had never been successfully blocked, and by the late 1940s there was a sizable, distinct, and increasingly vocal African landowning class that could no longer be ignored. In recognition of this, by the turn of the 1950s colonial agrarian policy sought to buttress capitalist agriculture in African areas, in which individual land tenure coupled with a program of land consolidation would form the basis. But far from assuaging the growing African landowning classes, this merely served to whet their appetites more and deepen their antagonism to settler farming interests. Moreover, the extension of commodity relations in the reserves and other African areas, accompanied as it was by expanding and more intensive settler and corporate farming, not only accentuated rural differentiation between landed and landless classes but also marginalized the squatter system; increasing numbers of former squatters found themselves being turned into an impoverished agricultural proletariat or faced evictions to the overpopulated reserves and barren new settlements.

The misery, bitterness, and unrest that characterized life in the reserves was thereby exacerbated.¹⁰ This meant there would be strong undercurrents of intra-African class struggle in the anticolonial offensive of the 1950s. It is therefore not surprising that Kenya was engulfed by a growing and broad-based tide of anti-colonial militance after the war: The workers were hungry and restive; squatters were rapidly sinking into destitution; the indigenous capitalist class was losing patience with the colonial-radical structures that were blocking their chances for further advancement and accumulation. Both the urban and rural areas became hotbeds of political unrest. The former witnessed the growth of militant trade unionism, while the latter slipped closer to the edge of revolt. Strikes proliferated, culminating in the Mombasa and Nairobi general strikes of 1947 and 1950, respectively. In the Central Province, Mau Mau oath-taking spread.¹¹

The colonial state responded ruthlessly. Arrests, repatriation, and depor-

9. M. Singh, *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952* (Nairobi, 1969); and S. Stichter, *Migrant Labour in Kenya, Capitalism and African Response, 1895-1975* (Harlow, Essex, 1982).

10. M. P. K. Sorrenson, *Land Reform in Kikuyu Country* (Nairobi, 1967); and F. Furedi, "The Social Composition of the Mau Mau Movement in the White Highlands," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 1, 4 (1974).

11. J. Spencer, "KAU and 'Mau Mau': Some Connections," *Kenya Historical Review* 5, 2 (1977); and M. Tamarkin, "Mau Mau in Nakuru," *idem*.

tation of those identified as agitators were stepped up. The year 1950 saw the arrest of militant trade unionists in Nairobi. Followers of the Dini Ya Musambwa were massacred in February 1948 and April 1950.¹² But the raging nationalist movement was only inflamed further. KAU, which had until 1950 remained committed to constitutionalist and reformist strategies and was based in the central province, became more radicalized as militant trade unionists, like Kaggia and Kubai, took control of KAU's Nairobi Branch in 1951, and as KAU extended its influence further afield in the country.¹³

The role of Kenyatta, who returned to Kenya in 1946 after a long stay in Britain and assumed the presidency of KAU in 1947, in fostering a broader nationalist image for KAU cannot be underestimated.¹⁴ It also ought to be noted that through Kenyatta, KAU and the Kenya Nationalist movement as a whole became directly linked to the wider Pan-Africanist movement, which had been sustained primarily in the diaspora.

The return of Kenyatta and Nkrumah to lead the fledgling nationalist movements in their respective countries represented Pan-Africanism's long-awaited return to the promised land. In 1945 in Manchester, the Pan-Africanists had declared their determination to be free at all costs.¹⁵ It was a militancy that was echoed and found succor in the growing restiveness within the colonies themselves, as well as in rising anti-colonial sentiments in a world only recently rid of fascism. From both sides of the international ideological divide, for very different reasons, and from newly independent India, there came unprecedented and almost universal condemnation of "old style" colonialism. The emerging anti-colonial "consensus" was transmitted to remote African villages through returning ex-servicemen, the lively African press, and that most revolutionary of inventions, the transistor radio. Nationalist parties like KAU, and organizations like trade unions and independent churches, encouraged it.

Direct British intervention in Kenya was prompted by the failure of the colonial state, including the settlers, to quell the social and popular struggles engulfing the country. On 20 October 1952 a state of emergency was declared, and Kenyatta and other leaders were arrested. On that same day, however, the Mboyas joined KAU.¹⁶ Herein lay the central contradiction of the emergency. It was declared in order to preserve colonialism in Kenya,

12. Were, "Nationalism in Western Kenya," pp. 96-97.

13. Kaggia, *Roots of Freedom*.

14. Some biographical material on Kenyatta can be gleaned from M. Slater, *The Trial of Jomo Kenyatta* (London, 1955); also see G. Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta* (London, 1961) and J. Murray-Brown, *Jomo Kenyatta* (London, 1973).

15. See I. Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement* (London, 1974) and V. B. Thomson, *Africa and Unity: The Evolution of Pan-Africanism* (Harlow, Essex, 1969).

16. D. Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (London, 1982).

but, ironically, the settlers, the custodians of that very colonial regime, were the first to be sacrificed. Soon, the Mau Mau fighters, who precipitated the crisis, would also find themselves left in the lurch, denied the right to inherit the political kingdom. In other words, the emergency generated new social and political processes that destroyed the basis of settler power, restructured the class and institutional bases of the colonial state, and altered the balance of class forces, so that both the settlers and the armed freedom fighters, the protagonists in the political crisis of 1952, became marginalized by the time of Kenya's independence in 1963.

The British government mobilized the best of its military and intelligence forces in order to defeat Mau Mau. By 1953, British Brigade Royal Air Force (RAF) squadrons, armored cars, and top intelligence officers had been sent to augment the seventy brigades of the King's African Rifles (KAR).¹⁷

The imperial authorities also resorted to draconian population controls and removals to disrupt the major bases of Mau Mau. The rural areas saw the implementation of "villagization" policy in which people were moved into specially created villages while Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru workers were repatriated en masse from Nairobi, beginning with "Operation Jock Scott" in 1952 and culminating in "Operation Anvil" in 1954. By the end of that year the detention camps and prisons held about 150,000 people under a brutal regime of torture and forced labor that led to many deaths, maiming, and even castration and insanity.¹⁸

The emergency was declared before Mau Mau leaders had effectively mobilized their forces; in fact, while some guerrillas had already been sent to Mount Kenya Forest, oath-taking was just beginning to take effect among other Kenyan nationalities outside the Central Province. Although the Mau Mau forces grew in size and daring, and fought some heroic battles, they could not hope to win the war, for the movement was not strong enough either militarily or organizationally to withstand the combined imperial-colonial onslaught. Moreover, despite vocal support in Pan-Africanist and other progressive circles, Mau Mau fighters received very little outside material assistance.¹⁹

The question of Mau Mau has exercised the minds of many Kenyan historians; indeed, it is still at the center of popular debates about the country's road to independence. The questions, however, have largely been posed in formalistic, not to say ideological, terms as to whether Mau Mau was atavistic or progressive, tribalist or nationalist, successful or betrayed. This

17. A. Clayton, *Counter-Insurgency in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1967).

18. Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour*, p. 353, and *Labour Department Annual Report* (1955), p. 9.

19. George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism* (London, 1956), chaps. 13, 14.

mode of inquiry by itself precludes concrete answers from being reached.²⁰ While noting that more research ought to be carried out on the social composition and ideological tendencies of the Mau Mau movement, it can plausibly be argued that the struggle against Mau Mau exacted a political price from the British imperialists. Their military occupation of Kenya could not last indefinitely, but neither could they return the country to the *status quo ante*. Reform became imperative.

A watershed year in Kenya's tortuous road to independence was 1954. Not only was it the year of the draconian "Operation Anvil," it also saw the birth of the Swynerton Plan, the Carpenter Committee, and the Lyttleton Constitution, all of which in their various ways embodied new state policies, which reflected, and further shaped, the underlying structural changes in Kenya's political economy.

The Swynerton Plan provided the funding and the rationale for the land-consolidation program and enclosure movement which, from the turn of the fifties, had come to be regarded as an essential prerequisite for an agricultural revolution in African areas.²¹ The land reforms were accompanied by the removal of the remaining restrictions against African production of lucrative cash crops such as coffee, pyrethrum, hybrid maize, and dairy products.

Thus, indigenous, Asian, and international capital marginalized settler capital in the 1950s. By the mid-fifties the value of goods manufactured in the country exceeded the total value of settler agricultural production.

As the economic fortunes of the settlers declined, the traditional centers of power in the colonial state apparatus were undermined. Or, to put it differently, growing African nationalism forced open the gates of African representation to the central structures of the colonial state, which ushered in more fierce struggles over who would ultimately control the state and the policies it would pursue. Thus, the rather cavalier attitude of some "radical" historians toward constitutional struggles is unwarranted. The association of struggle exclusively with armed struggle has led some historians in Kenya to treat the period up to 1955, when Mau Mau was active, as the peak of African nationalism and the subsequent years as marking nothing more than a humiliating retreat into "betrayal" and eventual "neocolonialism."²² Be-

20. See the papers, including bibliographical discourses, in B. A. Ogot, ed., *Politics and Nationalism in Colonial Kenya* (Nairobi, 1972) and *Kenya Historical Review* 5, 2 (1977), Special Issue—Perspectives on the Mau Mau Movement.

21. R. J. Swynerton, *A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1955).

22. See, for instance, Maina-wa-Kinyatti, "Mau Mau: The Peak of African Nationalism in Kenya," *Kenya Historical Review* 5, 2 (1977).

trayal might be an inspiring motif in great literature, but it will not do as a term of historical analysis. It would be equally wrong, of course, to assume that every stammering speech or petty theft committed during colonial rule constituted resistance and nationalism.

It might be a salutary reminder, both to those who dismiss Mau Mau's contribution to Kenya's decolonization and others who see the suppression of the movement as marking the end of the nationalist struggle, to note that Kenya's tortuous constitutional road to independence started in earnest with the introduction of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954, at the height of the British anti-Mau Mau crusade. The Lyttleton Constitution introduced a new central government structure based on a ministerial system and conceding the principle of multiracial representative parity between Europeans and non-Europeans. Under the new ministerial system, the division of agriculture into separate and independent departments was ended when the two were combined under the Ministry of Agriculture. A separate Ministry of Finance was also created to plan and coordinate overall national economic development.²³ This system broke up the hitherto powerful centralized Secretariat, undermined the powers of the Provincial Administrative officers, and opened up the state to professional politicians, including vocal African nationalists. Indeed, it was these African politicians who derailed each constitutional plan—beginning with the Lyttleton Constitution itself, which had been intended to last until 1960.

Politics could not be contained, and African politicians could certainly not be “pocketed,” because the land reforms and other economic reforms that had been introduced, while benefiting indigenous capitalist interests, fell far short of popular demands.

The land-consolidation program had repressive political objectives as well. As in all colonial “anti-insurgency” operations, the villagization policy that accompanied land consolidation was explicitly designed to break links between Mau Mau fighters and their supporters, buttress the position of loyalists, and seal the landlessness of the former. Consolidation was compulsory; the emergency villages were no better than concentration camps. No wonder that when attempts were made to extend consolidation from the Central Province, the heartland of Mau Mau, to other provinces, there was a lot of resistance, particularly in Nyanza, where consolidation was correctly understood as part and parcel of colonial repression.

Political accommodation to the so-called colonial reforms by Africans, including the majority of their leaders, was impossible. The realities were mass arrests and population removals, brutal torture in detention camps, the intensive and sometimes forced labor-recruitment campaigns conducted in the

23. George Bennett, *Kenya—A Political History* (London, 1963).

Nyanza and Southern provinces in order to replace the repatriated and detained KEM workers, continued coercive enforcement of soil conservation programs, and generalized fear and terror that was life in the Kenya of the 1950s. The stakes were now simply too high. No wonder that when attempts were made in 1955 to relax the ban, but limit African political associations to districts, they failed to contain the expression of nationalist aspirations and goals in these geographically contrived organizations. Mboya's Nairobi-based Convention Peoples party, for one, became a platform of "nationalist" agitation in form and content. One effect of the period of district-based political associations, however, was to encourage the introversion of national concerns to local ones and the emergence of local powerful political figures who would resist attempts at political centralization of KANU.

More often than not, the petit bourgeois African politicians, not the colonial governor or his overlords in London, held the initiative and dictated the pace of events. The imperial-inspired reforms, including the Lyttleton Constitution, did not initially represent an explicit program of decolonization. They were essentially piecemeal, ad hoc responses to intensifying political struggles within the country. When the back of Mau Mau had been broken after 1955, the colonial officials lulled themselves into the conviction that it would take another generation before Kenya could be considered ready for self-government. Such was the quality of imperial prescience that as late as January 1959 the colonial secretary, Lennox Boyd, and the East African colonial governors meeting in the ornate chambers of Chequers agreed that Kenya would not achieve her independence until after 1975, following Tanganyika and Uganda.²⁴ Governor Evelyn Baring had even toured the settler areas in May 1959 assuring the European farmers that Kenya would not be independent for another fifteen years and during that period Kenya would be a "fortress colony" containing a British army base. But in February 1960, Ian Macleod, the new colonial secretary, accepted the principle of independence under black majority rule within three years. What happened to the grand imperial timetable drawn up at Chequers? History intervened.

ACCESSION TO INDEPENDENCE

In 1957 the first African elections to the Legislative Council had been held. Out went six of the eight previously appointed African members—including Mathu, first appointed in 1944. And in came Mboya, Odinga, Moi, and Ngala, among others. A new generation of politicians had come to the center stage. They immediately grouped together under AEMO (African Elected Members

24. M. Blundell, *So Rough a Wind* (London, 1964), pp. 261–62.

Organization), rejected the Lyttleton Constitution, and refused to accept any ministerial post until Africans were granted fifteen more seats to give them a majority over the European and Asian elected members. Convinced that power now lay in London, not Nairobi, they sent a delegation to London to press for a new constitution.²⁵ Within months of their election, the Lyttleton Constitution was dead and buried.

In October 1957 the Lennox-Boyd Constitution was conceded, extending the multiracial formulation by raising African representation in the Legislative Council to fourteen, thereby giving Africans parity with the Europeans. In addition, African ministerial portfolios were increased to two. It was thought this constitution would last at least ten years. But within a month of its publication AEMO had rejected it and launched a boycott campaign. And then Odinga earned himself the epithet of a "radical" by mentioning, for the first time in the Legislative Council, that dreaded and revered of names, Kenyatta. By the end of 1958 all the elected African members, together with Asian members and one European member, had walked out of the Legislature, formed CEMO (Constituency Elected Members Organisation), and dispatched a delegation to London. Calls to have the emergency lifted and the veteran political leaders released became more strident. Then in March 1959 the Hola massacre took place, further inflaming the nationalists and tarnishing Britain's image both at home and abroad.²⁶

Clearly, the African nationalists held the initiative. The imperial government was groping from one policy to another, while the settlers were in disarray. In 1960 the state of emergency was abolished. In the same year, the first Lancaster House Constitutional Conference was convened. For the first time, the British Government conceded the principle of African majority rule in Kenya. But the form and content of Kenyan independence was far from decided. Indeed, in these terminal stages of colonial rule Kenya was gripped by a severe crisis, whose overall effect was to accelerate independence and deepen the restructuring of Kenya's political economy from one dominated by settlers to one dominated by a combination of indigenous and international capital.

In trying to explain these last few years of colonial rule, a number of writers, using models derived from pluralism to systems analysis, have argued that decolonization was essentially a bargaining process between Africans and the

25. See Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After* (Toronto, 1963); and Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru* (London, 1971).

26. For official accounts, see *Record of Proceedings and Evidence in the Inquiry into the Deaths of Eleven Mau Mau Detainees at Hola Camp in Kenya*, Cmd. 795 of 1959; *Documents Relating to the Deaths of Eleven Mau Mau Detainees at Hola Camp*, Cmd. 778 of 1959. Further *Documents Relating to Deaths of Eleven Mau Mau Detainees at Hola Camp in Kenya*, Cmd. 816 of 1959.

two racial minorities, Europeans and Asians, with the British colonial secretary playing the role of umpire. Rothchild concludes that direct bargaining between "the spokesmen of the three major races," which reached a peak at the turn of the sixties, ended in "a trade-off [taking] place between legal and constitutional concessions on the one hand and the acceptance, with certain limitations, of African power on the other."²⁷ Like the pluralistic model on which his whole analysis rests, with its cultural determinism, Rothchild tends to absolutize racial and ethnic collectivities, ignoring the horizontal ties of class. More importantly, the way "bargaining" is used connotes equality of the actors and a procedural smoothness to independence. The period between 1960 and 1963 was far from that. Writing a few years later, Wasserman tried to improve the bargaining thesis by underscoring the fact that by the end of the 1950s the settler bloc was fractured into divergent conservative and liberal camps, each with increasingly distinct social bases, priorities, and tactics. The conservatives, mostly composed of farming interests and centered on the Convention of Associations (before regrouping under the Kenya Coalition in 1960), wanted to preserve the status quo, while the liberals, representing settlers and Asians with large commercial interests and organized in the New Kenya Group, sought, we are told, to build up, and align with, a moderate African middle class.²⁸ Accordingly, decolonization was a dual process of bargaining and socialization, with independence the ultimate end. "From this perspective the decolonization process was not so much the *upward* development of an indigenous African political movement, as the *downward* manipulation of that movement into a system."²⁹

Wasserman's "consensual decolonization" in which the liberals succeeded in locking Kenya into a neocolonial system finds echoes in much of the dependency literature on Kenya.³⁰ The settlers, however, whether liberal or conservative, should not be confused with the agents of multinational firms whose members in Kenya were increasing and whose links with African producers and merchants were growing. The liberals certainly did not have the power to build up an African middle class (which at any rate had been long in formation in spite of the settlers) with which they could then align. Indeed, the liberal agenda, first, to create a multiracial state as an alternative to an all-African government, then to destroy Kenyatta politically by forming a government without him, and, finally, to divide African politicians and force a *majimbo* constitution with minority safeguards, all failed miserably. Where then was

27. D. Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya* (London, 1973), p. 8.

28. Gary Wasserman, *Politics of Decolonisation* (Cambridge, England, 1975), pp. 16, 166.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

30. For example, C. Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism* (London, 1974).

the liberal success? The bargaining thesis assumes there was a decolonization plan, that the decolonization process was merely a functionalist game of system maintenance. History is turned into a parody of voluntarism and continuity.

The dream of turning Kenya into a "White Man's Country" was given burial at Lancaster. The settlers felt betrayed. Thousands fled in fear of their lives, property, and pride as the cries of "*Uhuru na Kenyatta*" came deafeningly close to realization. Others ran down their farms as they waited to be bailed out by the British government. The Blundells hoped in vain that the transitional period would last for at least ten years, giving them enough time to manipulate African "moderates" in order to institutionalize settler representation and participation. But history did not permit such "bargains" to be made.³¹

The crisis was of such proportions that capital flight reached one million pounds a month, the Nairobi Stock Exchange fell sharply, the building industry virtually came to a standstill, and unemployment shot up dramatically.³² The economy was contracting precisely at the time that tens of thousands of detainees were being released and restrictions against KEM workers had been dropped. Land, that old festering wound of the Kenyan polity, threatened to open once again, while the labor system witnessed a return of the convulsions of the postwar years.

After the emergency was lifted, many of the returning detainees and forest fighters found either that their lands had been forfeited and redistributed or their previous landlessness had been irrevocably confirmed through the land-consolidation programs, which had been fully taken advantage of by pre-emergency landowners and loyalists. Incidents of rioting, illegal squatting, and land seizures were reported from the Central Province. There was also apparently a revival of oath-taking, an ominous development that a decade earlier had served as a prelude to the outbreak of Mau Mau.³³ In response to this impending explosion, the "yeoman" and "peasant" schemes introduced only in 1961 as a means of bailing out the settlers and buying off the expanding African agrarian bourgeoisie were quickly abandoned in favor of a more comprehensive land-settlement program that would include at least some of the

31. The Settler exodus is reported in detail by Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining*; also see Blundell, *So Rough a Wind*; Blundell became so disillusioned with politics that he soon turned his whole attention to making money!

32. Leys, *Underdevelopment*.

33. G. Lamb, *Peasant Politics* (Lawes, 1974); J. T. Kamunchuluh, "Meru Participation in Mau Mau," *Kenya Historical Review* 3, 2 (1975); A. Njonjo, "The Africanisation of the 'White Highlands': A Study in Agrarian Class Struggles in Kenya, 1950-1974," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Princeton University, 1977.

landless.³⁴ Thus were born the controversial land-settlement programs that would collectively be known as the Million Acre Scheme, after the 1.2 million acres that were allocated to thirty-five thousand families in the 1960s.

The scheme was funded by the British government, the Colonial Development Fund, and the World Bank to the tune of 7.5 million pounds. The involvement of international capital was seen in imperial, as well as settler, circles as the best guarantee against possible ravages of nationalist expropriation; it would take a daring government indeed to offend the World Bank.³⁵ The nationalists, with the exception of the radical fringe opposed to the principle of compensation itself, came to see in the land settlement a way of killing two birds with one stone: defusing rural unrest and promoting the interests of the African landed class. Other squatter settlement schemes were to be launched after independence. But over half of the settler lands were transferred almost intact by sale to wealthy Africans organized in partnerships or limited-liability companies.³⁶ Thus, a new land policy based on class instead of race was being established in Kenya.

The agrarian crisis was accompanied by a labor crisis. There was a resurgence of worker militancy despite the rising unemployment and the growing collaboration between the Kenya Federation of Labor (KFL) and the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE). The government, through the Labor Department, also came to see in collective bargaining a way of enticing trade unions into moderation. Thus was begun a long courtship of convenience between organized labor and industrial capital, with the state acting as matchmaker. But the workers refused to consummate the tripartite marriage.

The threats to the labor-control system that the labor unrest of 1960–1963 provided, as well as the current agrarian crisis, were symptoms of, and themselves accelerated, the transition from the colonial to a post-colonial state and society. Ever since the emergency and the direct intervention of the imperial state, the colonial state had become an arena of fierce conflict, the result of which had been the rise of African representation and a corresponding diminution of the settler hold over state institutions. By 1960 imperial state intervention itself had become such that, during the 1960–1963 interregnum,

34. See C. Leon, "Who Benefitted from the Million-acre Scheme? Toward a Class Analysis of Kenya's Transition to Independence," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 15, 2 (1981).

35. Ibid. Also see H. Ruthenberg, *African Agricultural Production: Development Policy in Kenya, 1952–1965* (New York, 1966); J. W. Harbeson, *Nation-Building in Kenya: The Role of Land Reform* (Evanston, Ill., 1973); R. S. Odingo, "Land Settlement in the Kenya Highlands," in J. A. Sheffield, ed., *Education, Employment and Rural Development* (Nairobi, 1967).

36. Leys, *Underdevelopment*, pp. 73–114; and C. Leo, "The Failure of the 'Progressive Farmers' in Kenya's Million Acre Settlement Scheme," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 16, 4 (1978).

officials of the colonial state, from the field officers in the Provincial Administration to the governor himself at the center, had become functionaries. They were no longer active participants in the formulation of key policies, which were now being directly negotiated at Lancaster between the colonial secretary and the African nationalists. The nationalists had come a long way. But the demise of the settlers, followed as it was by the adoption of the principle of majority rule by the imperial state and the subsequent exclusion of the colonial administrators in the great constitutional wrangles, had the effect of concentrating the struggle for power among the various factions of the nationalist movement. In other words, in the tempest of the transition to independence, the centrifugal social forces held within the nationalist torrent threatened to burst open.

It is not a coincidence that the two main nationalist parties were formed following the first Lancaster House Constitutional Conference. In a sense the formation of KANU and KADU was a crystallization of apparent cleavages in the ranks of African members of the legislature that had led to the breakup of CEMO in 1959 into the KNP (Kenya National Party), led by Ngala and Moi, the future leaders of KADU, and the KIM (Kenya Independence Movement), under the uneasy leadership of Mboya and Odinga, a schism that would linger on in KANU. Often these cleavages have been explained in terms of personality clashes or ideological tendencies whereby KADU is labeled “moderate” and KANU “radical.”³⁷ While personality clashes and jostling for influence cannot be discounted altogether in an era noted for its turbulence and the presence of powerful figures with strong independent bases of support, they need not be overstated, either. Indeed, the fiercest protagonists, Mboya and Odinga, both Luo, were also members of KANU. The ideological labels, on the other hand, are precisely that, labels that mystify as much as explain the sources and trajectory of the conflict. The broad programmatic similarities between KADU and KANU tend to be overlooked, so that the ease with which KADU dissolved itself into KANU in 1964 is then regarded as something “sudden.”³⁸ This is not to say the parties did not see themselves or portray their conflict in sometimes precisely these terms, or indeed that the ideological differences were not *real*; rather, it is to suggest that ideological explanations are inadequate.

At the root of political factionalism during this period lay the conjuncture of

37. See, for instance, Leys, *Underdevelopment*, pp. 212–14, as well as the writings of the protagonists themselves, particularly Mboya, *Freedom and After*, and Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*.

38. C. Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya* (London, 1970), is correctly wary of using these labels, but still does not satisfactorily explain the dissolution of KADU into KANU in 1964. There were, of course, a lot of contacts between the two parties almost from the time of their formation. In 1961 the two agreed to an independence timetable as well as general economic policies. See *KANU-KADU Accord* (Nairobi, 1961).

approaching independence in a society suffering from acutely uneven development. Uneven development in Kenya, as in other colonial formations, had historically corresponded to, and been intersected by, regional, ethnic, and class factors. In spite of the emergency—in fact, because of it—the Central Province, populated mostly by the Kikuyu, had continued its relatively fast level of development. This ensured that the Kikuyu petty bourgeoisie, numerically the largest in the country, would be central to any post-colonial dispensation. But during the emergency, political leadership of the nationalist movement had passed on to a petty-bourgeois leadership that was predominantly Luo, the second-largest nationality in Kenya, inhabiting a region that had also been significantly penetrated by colonial capitalism, albeit in different forms. By the time the emergency was lifted and Kikuyu leaders were allowed to reenter politics, the Mboyas and Odingas were sufficiently entrenched not to fear for their positions and influence, although the overall scope of leadership conflict was broadened, thus making it more intense and open.

The same could not be said of the Rift Valley and coastal regions and peoples where colonial capitalism was less developed and their petty-bourgeois classes were much smaller and more vulnerable at the national level. The Kalenjin peoples of the Rift Valley, unlike the Luo, lived in close geographic proximity to the so-called White Highlands bordering their areas. The Kalenjin feared not only the possibility that the Kikuyu would override these claims but also that they might “colonize” their areas, especially now that there were tens of thousands of landless Kikuyu agitating for land.³⁹ The official anti-Kikuyu propaganda of the emergency merely served to inflate these fears. Meanwhile, the coastal peoples had developed fears of economic domination by the “upcountry peoples” who already formed the bulk of the labor force. Concurrently, the conflict between the coastal Africans, particularly squatters, and Arab-Swahili landholders had come into the open. Faced with this challenge as well as the ominous developments upcountry, and buoyed by temporary economic and cultural revival, the Arabs began agitating for *Mwambo*, or autonomy, for the coastal strip. This met unqualified opposition from coastal-African political groups.⁴⁰ In other words, coastal Africans both opposed the historical dominance of the Arabs and would not countenance the possibility of new domination by the “upcountry *washenzi*.”

Underlying the broader regional cleavages, there were local social, eco-

39. Gertzel, *Independent Kenya*, pp. 9–10.

40. R. M. Mambo, “Political Activity among the Mijikenda”; A. I. Salim, *Swahili-speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast, 1895–1965* (Nairobi, 1973), chap. 6; K. K. Jammohamed, “Ethnicity in an Urban Setting: A Case Study of Mombasa,” in B. A. Ogot, ed., *History and Social Change in East Africa* (Nairobi, 1976).

nomic, and political divisions that provided a basis for local factional and leadership rivalries and future inter-ethnic and inter-regional political realignments. In fact, both KANU and KADU were basically loose coalitions with weak central party machinery, so that almost from the beginning they were given to internal political fissures and realignments. The fact that these parties were formed in the midst of the transition to independence meant that there was not enough time to consolidate the party structures and therefore institutionalize the interparty conflict. Hence the relative ease with which KADU dissolved itself into KANU in November 1964.

By then, of course, Kenya had attained her independence under KANU. KADU's attempt to form a government with the help of European and Asian members in 1961 was a failure, following the refusal of KANU to form a government despite its electoral victory until Kenyatta was released. KANU's popularity soared. So did the party's militancy. Kenyatta was released. Further constitutional conferences were held. And, as generally expected, KANU swept the independence elections of 1963. On the night of 12 December the Union Jack was finally hauled down, as Kenya's black, red, green, and white flag was hoisted, ending sixty-odd years of colonial rule.

INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER

The KANU government quickly moved to centralize the state apparatus: Regionalism was abolished in 1964; a republican constitution was promulgated, followed by the abolition of the senate two years later. The new ruling class gradually consolidated immense power in the hands of the executive, which came to rely more on the Provincial Administration instead of the party.⁴¹ But the civil-service bureaucracy on which the post-independence administration depended was dominated by personnel drawn from loyalist elements first recruited into government service during the emergency. For instance, twenty-seven out of fifty-two provincial and district commissioners in office by 1971 had entered government service during the emergency. The same was true of thirteen of the nineteen permanent secretaries. Moreover, many key European senior officials, now renamed advisers, remained on in their old department for several years after independence.⁴² Many colonial institutions such as the army, police, judiciary, civil service and Parliament were left almost intact, with Europeans holding key positions. Bruce Mackenzie, for example, was appointed minister of agriculture in Kenyatta's government, Humphrey Slade remained Speaker of Parliament, and the judiciary was

41. Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya*, chap. 2.

42. Njonjo, "Africanisation," p. 114.

manned largely by white judges. Such essential continuities signified the political opportunities and institutional restraints provided by independence.

The struggle for state power did not end with the attainment of independence. In fact, it intensified as the centrifugal forces of the independence movement jostled for a share of the spoils of *uhuru*. KANU's and KADU's dissolution meant that at the beginning the main policy debates concerning the economic and political structure of the post-independent state would be conducted inside Parliament and not inside the party.

Initially, the debates were carried on primarily between the government and its back bench. Back-bench criticism sought to keep alive popular demands in a one-party House and forestall the emergence of an oligarchic cabinet government. The government did not sit idly by; it managed to oust its severest back-bench critics. The years 1964 and 1966 were marked by fierce internecine conflicts within the party. By mid-1965 the back-bench group had been disbanded, and the assassination on 24 February 1965 of P. Gama Pinto, an ideologue of the Kenya socialists, was a devastating blow to the radicals. Sharpened policy disagreements now cut across both back and front benches.⁴³

The disagreements were over questions of allocation of resources, land, nationalization, foreign policy, and education. Because of acutely uneven development within the country, and the ethnic basis of representation, the debate often took ethnic overtones. The bogey of "tribalism" was exploited for all it was worth. But as the disagreements deepened and cut across provinces and districts, they were formulated in more consciously ideological terms, with the "radicals" led by Odinga and Kaggia pitted against the "conservatives," whose leaders included Kenyatta, Mboya, Ngala, and Moi. On land the radicals would have preferred the free redistribution of settler lands to the landless. They were strongly against the growth of a small but powerful African landed class. Landless peasants, squatters, and ex-Mau Mau guerillas themselves expected free land grants. The conservatives would have none of that; they were convinced of the virtues of a "free" land market and uncontrolled land acquisition. Underlying all this was a conflict over restricted and unrestricted accumulation and ownership of private property. This was extended to the question of nationalization, with the radicals advocating nationalization of the major means of production, especially foreign-owned enterprises, and the conservatives arguing that nationalization was wasteful in that it did not lead to the creation of additional resources for the economy as a whole.

43. The following discussion draws on Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya*; Tom Mboya, *The Challenge of Nationhood* (New York, 1970); H. Bienen, *Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control* (Princeton, 1974).

Nationalization implied compensation, and it might frighten off foreign investment necessary for economic development. This meant the conservatives sought to maintain, if not expand, existing links with western countries from which foreign investment came. Thus, in foreign policy the conservatives were more partial to the West than the East. As President Kenyatta warned on Madaraka Day on 1 June 1965, "Some people try deliberately to exploit the colonial hangover for their own interest, to serve some external force. To us Communism is as bad as imperialism." The radicals, on the other hand, were suspicious of the country's historical and structural links with the West and felt genuine independence and nonalignment in foreign policy could only be expressed by leaning "a little more to the East." Finally, the radicals emphasized the need to create a much more egalitarian society; in this endeavor free education was a necessary precondition. Their conservative critics were careful not to reject the case for free education; instead, they questioned the methods by which the radicals intended to introduce it, given, in their view, the limited resources available.

In order to achieve their objectives, the radicals demanded that an ideological institute for training party cadres be established and an independent party newspaper be launched. The first objective was achieved when Kenyatta inaugurated the Lumumba Institute on 14 December 1964, exactly two days after Kenya became a republic. Kenyatta and Odinga were listed as the founders of the institute, with B. M. Kaggia as chairman of the Board of Management. The institute aimed at defining, teaching, and popularizing African socialism in the context of universally accepted socialist principles and practices. Very soon it became a major center for teaching scientific socialism and an ideological embarrassment to Kenyatta and his government. The institute had to be closed down by the government, and Kenyatta never experimented with scientific socialism again. Regarding the second objective, KANU in fact never established a party newspaper until 1983, when President Moi founded three party newspapers.

In a sense, the radicals and conservatives were shadowboxing in the same arena for legitimacy in a society recently rid of direct colonial rule, where popular expectations were high, but the state's ability to fulfill them were limited by both internal and external constraints. The issuing of Sessional Paper No. 10, on *African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya*, was a skillful attempt to present the conservatives' ideology in the radicals' clothing. It involved the classlessness of African society and the universality of property ownership, the need for Africanization without compromising rapid economic growth, the importance of private investment, and the role of the state as a benevolent guardian of the public interest, not through public ownership but through regulatory controls.⁴⁴

44. Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, Government Printer, Nairobi.

In the introduction to *African Socialism*, Kenyatta wrote "that the document should bring to an end all the conflicting, theocritical and academic arguments that have been going on." The paper was introduced in the National Assembly on 27 April 1965, without prior consultation. The radicals were unable to articulate a full reply. Their ideological unraveling had begun.

Soon the public conflicts arising out of the long-standing policy disagreements were polarized around the old antagonists, Mboya and Odinga, whose renewed rivalry reflected the changing alignments and intensified struggle for leadership in the Parliamentary party and cabinet following KADU's dissolution. Mboya was young, ambitious, and extremely articulate, and as secretary-general of KANU he was the leading ideologue of the regime. His political base lay in the cosmopolitan world of working-class and petty-bourgeois Nairobi. Odinga was an ardent anti-colonialist, given to populist instincts and fiery outbursts, but his national stature was firmly rooted in his position as a community leader.

The conflict soon came to a head. The radicals were outmaneuvered at the Limuru KANU Conference held in March 1966. Odinga lost his post of vice president of the party when the position of national vice president was abolished, and eight provincial vice presidents, one for each province and one for Nairobi, were established instead. None of Odinga's associates was reelected to any office. The die was cast. On 14 April Odinga resigned both as vice president of Kenya and member of KANU, accusing the government of having reached a point of no return. Mboya retorted that it was Odinga who had reached a point of no return. Odinga's resignation was followed by that of thirty others, including two ministers, although about half defected back to KANU. One of the ministers who followed Odinga was Achieng' Oneko, Kenyatta's old comrade, his former secretary and minister for information and broadcasting. Odinga and his remaining followers regrouped into an opposition, the Kenya Peoples' Union (KPU).

On 26 April Odinga assumed the presidency of KPU with Kaggia as vice president. The government quickly passed retrospective legislation that obliged the members who had switched to the KPU to fight by-elections. This became known as the "Little General Election" of May 1966. The KPU prepared an election manifesto that presented a half-hearted and belated reply to Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965. It promised land redistribution to the landless but indicated that no African-owned land would be expropriated. It held out help to the "small trader" but warned against exploitation of the consumer "in a cut-throat free-for-all society."⁴⁵ This ambivalence reflected ideological paralysis, induced in part by the disparate interests represented by the radicals in terms of the regions they came from. Indeed, the economic and political issues in the election were expressed in an ethnic idiom. Kaggia, once consid-

⁴⁵. See Leys, *Underdevelopment*, pp. 224-27.

ered the second most powerful man in Kikuyuland after Kenyatta himself, but now Odinga's deputy in the KPU, was painted as a renegade in his Central Province constituency. He had sided with the Luo to challenge Kenyatta. In the election Kaggia was roundly defeated by a political unknown. In central Nyanza, Odinga and his associates won their seats, despite spirited campaigning for KANU candidates by Luoland's other illustrious son, Mboya.

The KPU emerged from the elections weaker than before; only nine members out of twenty-nine had managed to retain their seats. The government used the state machine to harass KPU leaders, who were portrayed, especially by Kenyatta, as unpatriotic, subversive, and "tribalistic." The fact that seven of the nine KPU MPs were Luo certainly did not help the KPU's position. Then came the blow of Kaggia's defection from the KPU in August 1969 together with virtually the whole of the rest of the KPU's Kikuyu leadership. On 27 October 1969 Odinga and all the other KPU leaders were arrested. Three days later the KPU was banned. This ban came in the wake of months of tension following Mboya's assassination on 5 July 1969, and immediately after President Kenyatta's violence-ridden visit to Kismu, Kenya became once again a *de facto* one-party state. The Kikuyu-Luo alliance, forged in the heady nationalist fifties and early sixties, was buckling under the weight of post-colonial ethnic realignments. Unsuccessful attempts were later made by ethnic associations such as the Luo Union and the Gikuyu, Embu, Meru Association (GEMA) to revive this alliance. During the "change-the-constitution" controversy, GEMA tried to bar Moi from succeeding Kenyatta. The Kalenjin now became the chief allies of the Kikuyu.⁴⁶

Broadly speaking, the struggles between the various factions of the "power bloc" between 1964 and 1970 were indicative of the disintegrating alliance that had been forged between the restive petty bourgeoisie and disaffected masses in the struggle for independence. New alliances were now emerging, primarily between the landed capitalists, many of whom had been loyalists, the expanding bureaucratic and managerial classes, and those peasants who benefited from the land settlement schemes—in short, all those who stood to gain if the state used its powers to confirm rights to property acquired during and after the emergency or wished to break into areas of accumulation formerly reserved for European settlers and Asians. No wonder KANU leadership, representing this class alliance, became basically moderate in its political and economic orientation, to the chagrin of the radicals, both inside and outside the party. By 1970 the hegemony of this new ruling class was well established, although that did not mark the end of intense political splits within the Kenyan bourgeoisie. Much of this infighting took place within

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 228–29.

KANU, where different factions of the bourgeoisie attempted to capture the party machinery. No dominant faction emerged, and, despite several attempts, no party elections were held until after the death of Kenyatta in 1978.

ECONOMY

By the end of the 1960s a lot had changed in the nature of the Kenyan economy, although much also remained the same structurally. Since independence the post-colonial state had been under immense pressure from the growing army of the landless to accelerate land settlement and from the aspiring African agrarian bourgeoisie to complete the Africanization of the large settler farms. The state walked a delicate tightrope; failure would mean descent into the intractable abyss of political instability, economic stagnation, and social dislocation.

While, on the one hand, the state harassed and arrested leaders of the free-land movement, represented organizationally by the Kenya Land Freedom Army up to 1965 and later by the Parliamentary radicals and the KPU, the state also introduced a number of new settlement schemes and accelerated those started in the last days of colonial rule. In 1965 the Squatter Settlement Scheme was introduced, intended to supply land to about forty-six thousand registered squatters from the Rift Valley and elsewhere. By 1971, about thirty-one thousand of these squatters had been settled.⁴⁷ By then the Million Acre Scheme, which had been introduced in 1962, was largely complete. Other programs were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s designed to settle some of the many Kenyans who remained landless. Now, it seemed, nationalist supporters were being favored, probably to compensate for favoritism extended to loyalists before independence.⁴⁸ The land, however, was not granted for free, but purchased at full market prices.

Thus, after independence settlement was accelerated because of continued agitation for land by the landless. But not all the landless were accommodated, and those who got land were loaded with burdensome debts. To some of them the sweet smell of *uhuru* soon gave way to the bitter taste of persistent poverty. Meanwhile, the landed African bourgeoisie were also waging a struggle for the Africanization of large farms. Initially favorable to a free market in land, by 1967 they had become alarmed by the fact that foreign companies and individuals had bought up almost as much land as had been earmarked for smallholder settlers. The operation of market forces threatened to thwart their dream of Africanizing the former White Highlands. They soon secured

47. Tabitha Kanogo, *Slavery in the White Highlands* (London, forthcoming), chap. 6.

48. Christopher Leo, *Land and Class in Kenya* (Toronto, 1984), p. 142.

the passage of the Land Control Act, whereby district-level boards were created and given the power to review land transactions. These boards acted forcefully to support the accumulative interests of prospective African land buyers by refusing to permit sales of land to non-Africans.⁴⁹

The settlement programs and the Africanization of the large farms had the effect of pushing foreign capital away from agriculture into the manufacturing sector. By 1977 it was estimated that only 5 percent of the mixed farm area within the former White Highlands remained in expatriate hands. The transfer to African owners of corporate ranches and coffee plantations was well advanced, and the transfer of the much more concentrated tea estates appeared on the cards.⁵⁰

The increase in African agricultural commodity production, itself an indication of the extension of capitalist relations, was nothing short of phenomenal in the 1960s and 1970s. The smallholdings sector accounted for an increasingly large share of production of all the key cash crops from coffee, tea, pyrethrum, to hybrid maize, horticultural produce, and grade cattle. But this cash-crop "revolution" developed unevenly in spatial and social terms. Not all farming households participated in it. The uneven development of cash-crop production between capitalism and peasant farmers, and among peasants, was determined by the size of the landholdings and access to off-farm income. Many studies have shown how both absolute and relative poverty was deepened for the rural poor. It can be concluded that since independence the processes of accumulation and pauperization in agriculture have accelerated and reinforced each other.

While foreign ownership in agriculture was negligible by the mid-1970s, the same could not be said of industry. Indeed, as opportunities for accumulation in agriculture shrank, foreign capital moved into commerce and industry. Many writers in the 1960s and 1970s were so overwhelmed by the appearance of foreign control of industry that they concluded the structure of Kenyan industry was virtually the same in the years after independence as in the years before.

Leys sanctified this interpretation in his widely acclaimed book published in 1975.⁵¹ This was at the height of underdevelopment theory, which proclaims that while the form of incorporation changes from time to time, the structure of dependency does not; indeed, it is constantly deepening.⁵² De-

49. Ibid., p. 178.

50. Colin Leys, "Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency: Kenya," in Martin Fransman, ed., *Industry and Accumulation in Africa* (London, 1982), p. 178.

51. Leys, *Underdevelopment*.

52. See, for instance, Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York, 1967); Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale*, vols. 1, 2 (New York, 1974); I. Wallerstein, "The Three Stages of African Involvement in the World Economy," in I. Wallerstein

colonization, therefore, simply ushered in a new and higher stage for Africa's incorporation into the world capitalist system from which her "comprador" or "auxiliary" bourgeoisie cannot effectively break out.⁵³

Leys noted that virtually all the expansion in industry that occurred between 1964 and 1970 was foreign owned and controlled.⁵⁴ Multinational corporations, he argued, were increasing their control of the economy by swallowing old settler firms and expanding into new areas of manufacturing. All the state was doing was buying shares in some of these companies to share in a little of the profits. The state also tried to encourage Africanization of staff, and it set investment and pricing controls. But these measures did not "seriously limit the freedom of foreign investors to operate as they pleased."⁵⁵ By the end of the 1960s, he concluded, "the nexus between the government and foreign capital was an extremely close one, and was reinforced by the interests of an African petty-bourgeoisie which had been establishing itself inside the system of state protection as an auxiliary of foreign capital."⁵⁶

The notion of the post-colonial state as an agent of foreign capital ignores the changed social-class basis of the post-colonial state and its greater degree of hegemony over, and legitimation in, post-colonial society.⁵⁷ The image of the national bourgeoisie as an impotent class of intermediaries between foreign capital and the exploited masses echoes Fanon's withering contempt for this class.⁵⁸

Critics of underdevelopment theory, who began to be heard loudly from the mid-1970s, argued that independence does matter; that the national bourgeoisie are not mindless puppets but are capable of "rational" accumulation; that there is nothing in the logic of history that locks underdeveloped countries into everlasting dependency.⁵⁹

Swanison vigorously argued that in Kenya an independent national bour-

and P. C. W. Gutkind, eds., *The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa* (London, 1976);

Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Dar es Salaam, 1972).

53. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York, 1963).

54. Leys, *Underdevelopment*, p. 118.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

57. See the debate on the post-colonial state in Hary Goulbourne, ed., *Politics and the State in the Third World* (London, 1979). Also see papers on the post-colonial state in *Review of African Political Economy*, 5 and 8 (1976-1977).

58. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.

59. See, for example, E. Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America," *New Left Review* 67 (1971); Bill Warren, "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization," *New Left Review*, 81 (1973); Robert Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism," *New Left Review* 104 (1977); Gabriel Palma, "Dependency: A Formal Theory of Underdevelopment or a Methodology for the Analysis of Concrete Situations of Underdevelopment?" *World Development* 6 (1978); F. H. Cardoso and E. Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (Berkeley, 1979).

geoisie, using the post-colonial state to further its own accumulation and often caught in competition with foreign capital, was developing after independence. This bourgeoisie was moving out of commerce into production. They used legislative means to gain a foothold in the commercial sector to the disadvantage of Europeans and Asians. Furthermore, credit facilities for African enterprises were extended considerably after independence. From 1974 commercial banks were required to lend locally owned firms up to 60 percent of their investment in an enterprise, while nonresident firms (with more than 50 percent of their shares held abroad) were not allowed to borrow more than 20 percent of their investment. After 1974 all applications by foreign firms for local loans were subject to Central Bank approval.

It is not surprising then that African capitalists accounted for an increasing share of new companies formed in the country after independence, from 19 percent of the total in 1964 to 46 percent in 1973.⁶⁰ There was also a general increase in the size of African companies. Evidence such as this forced Leys, the éminence grise of the dependency school in Kenya, to abandon his earlier position. "The history of the sixteen years since independence in Kenya," he wrote in 1979, "shows one thing unambiguously: a massive retreat by non-indigenous capital *out* of one sphere of accumulation after another. . . . How this could have occurred with a *decline* of real per capita incomes—let alone the roughly 25% increase . . . is entirely incomprehensible from the standpoint of 'dependency.'"⁶¹ Ley's erstwhile followers were not amused, and they launched trenchant critiques against him in which they reaffirmed the persistence of dependency in Kenya.⁶²

The Swanison-Leys position was a timely corrective against stagnationist views of dependency theory, which put underdeveloped countries into a historical deep freeze, and conspiratorial neocolonial theories, which fail to grasp that the exercise of state power after independence is a manifestation of the class power already achieved by the indigenous bourgeoisie in the decolonization drama.

But the independence of the indigenous bourgeoisie should not be exaggerated.

60. Swanison, *Corporate Capitalism in Kenya*, p. 195.

61. Colin Leys, "Kenya: What Does 'Dependency' Explain?" *Review of African Political Economy* 17 (1980): 109. Also see his earlier papers, "Underdevelopment and Dependency: Critical Notes," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 7, 1 (1977); and "Capital Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency," *Socialist Register* (1978).

62. See especially R. Kaplinsky, "Capitalist Accumulation in the Periphery—The Kenyan Case Re-examined," *Review of African Political Economy* 17 (1980); S. Langdo, "The State and Capitalism in Kenya," *Review of African Political Economy* 8 (1977); B. Beckman, "Imperialism and Capitalist Transformation: Critique of a Kenyan Debate," *Review of African Political Economy* 19 (1980).

After 1963 foreign capital was drawn from many major capitalist countries other than Britain, mainly through multinational corporations. Existing British enterprises became more concentrated as big enterprises took over smaller ones. For example, between 1966 and 1973 Lonrho acquired about fifty subsidiaries in Kenya.⁶³ This is indicative of a general trend toward concentration of foreign capital in Kenya. The multinationals invested mostly in import-substitution industries. From the mid-1970s they were invited to invest in export manufacturing. It had become clear by the early 1970s that import substitution as an industrialization strategy had failed in Kenya to achieve what was intended: to alleviate the balance of payments constraint, create extensive employment opportunities, and establish the basis for full industrialization and technological development.⁶⁴

The multinational corporations played a dominant role in the shift to export manufacturing, with the explicit encouragement of the state, although they did not deliver the expected benefits. Simultaneously, the state placed severe restrictions on foreign capital, in order to open doors to African capitalists. Thus the capital accumulation in Kenya has exhibited two contradictory trends since independence: nationalization and internationalization. The national bourgeoisie has indeed come a long way, but not far enough to dislodge foreign capital entirely, let alone to alter in any fundamental way Kenya's position in the international division of labor as an exporter of primary agricultural commodities.

CONCLUSION

The death of President Kenyatta in August 1978 marked the end of an era in Kenya, during which the country's independence was consolidated. The Kenya of 1978 was vastly different in its social character from the Kenya of 1963. Settler influence on social life had all but disappeared. The Africanization of the former White Highlands and the settlers' "city in the sun," Nairobi, was unmistakable. And despite the persistent pull of horizontal ties of ethnicity, fueled by struggles over allocation of resources, a Kenyan "nation" had emerged, one that could easily be differentiated from Uganda with its seemingly intractable political crises and Tanzania with its egalitarian *ujamaa* ideology. The dissolution of the East African Community in 1977, and the dissolving of its common services and institutions, resulted from the dilution of Kenya's East African identity into the fermenting gourd of Kenyan nationhood.

63. Swanison, *Corporate Capitalism in Kenya*, p. 214.

64. See Ajit Singh, "Industrialization in Africa: A Structuralist View," and Fred Nixon, "Import-Substituting Industrialization," in M. Fransman, *Industry and Accumulation in Africa*.

The Kenya of 1978 was a capitalist Kenya, more extensively so than the Kenya of 1963. Agriculture, commerce, and industry had all expanded, and indigenous capital had become completely dominant in the first sector, was preponderant in the second, and beginning to raise its stakes in the third. At this stage in its history indigenous accumulation in Kenya was facilitated by the post-colonial state. Historically the state has played a similar role in countries at Kenya's stage of accumulation. And as is in the nature of capitalism, accumulation in Kenya has gone hand in hand with pauperization. The agrarian bourgeoisie has expanded and consolidated itself, just as the class of poor and landless peasants has grown. Manufacturing production has increased, and so has unemployment. But the nationalization of the Kenyan economy has also been accompanied by its contradictory counterpart, internationalization. By 1978 Kenya was still a dependent export economy, heavily penetrated by foreign capital from all the major capitalist countries, so that she was more firmly and broadly integrated into the world capitalist system than at independence.

This chapter has shown that decolonization did not signify either a triumph of imperial planning or neocolonial conspiracy, nor was it a total victory for those beloved masses of nationalist demagogues, and still less was it the cumulative outcome of racial bargaining. The decolonization process was a complex, bitter struggle arising out of, and involving, structural changes in agriculture, commerce, industry, and labor relations, which in turn altered the balance of power within the colonial state and thus between it and the imperial state. For Kenya, decolonization marked a turbulent transition from a settler-dominated colony to an independent nation under an indigenous ruling class. This class used its political power to enhance the accumulation of the local bourgeoisie, while, paradoxically, the economy was getting more widely and firmly integrated into the world capitalist system.

17. *Independence without Decolonization:
Mozambique, 1974–1975*

AQUINO DE BRAGANÇA
with Introductory Note by Basil Davidson

This chapter draws on the insights and research of a Mozambican historian, since tragically killed, who was uniquely placed to analyze the various Portuguese positions on decolonization at and after the military coup of 25 April 1974 in Portugal which felled the dictatorship of the *Estado Novo*. At the same time he was party to the inner thinking of the Mozambican liberation movement FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), which was formed in 1962 and embarked on guerrilla war for Mozambican independence in 1964.

The course and denouement of events after the military coup of April 1974 did in fact yield an outcome—and on this aspect, at least, there has been no disagreement—which was without precedent in the history of the “transfer of power” in Africa or perhaps anywhere else. There was no transfer of power in any customary sense of the term, but an outright taking of power by the colonized and a comparable concession by the colonizer: this, in Bragança’s words, was “an independence without decolonization, an independence without the consequence of a neocolonial regime.”

To see how this could be possible it is necessary to measure the contrast in approach and political experience that divided the two sides in their postcoup encounters. This means taking account of the changing relation of political forces within the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas), which had carried out the April coup under a leadership by no means clearly committed to any transfer of power to Portugal’s colonized peoples. These encounters must be placed within the wider arena of Portuguese African developments at the time. Above all it is necessary to gauge the sharp

difference in the Portuguese position that followed the fall of General António Spínola at the end of September 1974.

The effective timespan covers the period from the Lisbon coup to the middle of 1975. Much has been written on the subject, even though archival materials have remained sparse or inaccessible. Leaving aside merely propagandist or personalist versions—such as those of four of the dictatorship's defeated generals, who lost no time in claiming that the home front had stabbed them in the back¹—two serious explanations of events may be considered. One of these has been well stated by the American Lusophonist, Kenneth Maxwell; the other is set forth here.

Maxwell has concluded that the Portuguese withdrawal from colonial empire in Africa was the product of skillful political and diplomatic action, chiefly by the African allies of FRELIMO and its sister movements. He writes that "the decolonization of Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique was a quiet triumph for African nonaligned diplomacy," and that this diplomacy "emanated largely from Algiers and from Lusaka in Zambia."² In this view the crucial element lay in the action of the governments of Algeria and Zambia, for example, in bringing the two sides together for a process of negotiation out of which came the "settlements," in Maxwell's term, which secured Portuguese withdrawal. We are asked to agree that without this "strenuous secret diplomacy," again in Maxwell's phrasing, there would have been a different outcome, and perhaps the failure of the whole project of making peace.

The aid of Algiers and Lusaka is not in question. But Maxwell's explanation seems curiously distanced from what was actually happening at the time. For it entirely smuggles off the scene the fact of warfare, and the state of balance of that warfare, and in doing this ignores the plight of the Portuguese armed forces by the end of 1973. Let us recall the timetable of significant events. Thanks to repeatedly successful offensives in the first half of 1973, the forces of the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau, PAIGC (Partido Africano de Independência de Guiné e Cabo Verde), enabled its political leadership to declare an independent republic in September 1973. The PAIGC at that time was in fact in secure control of only two-thirds of the country, but the Portuguese armed forces had been fought to a standstill in the remaining third. This independence was recognized by the United Nations without delay, and then by some eighty countries. At this point the radical trend within the Portuguese forces in Guinea-Bissau—a trend led by young captains and lieutenants, many of whom had already reached an anti-colonial posture—began to

1. General J. da Luz Cunha, Kaúlza de Arriaga, Bethencourt Rodrigues, and Silvino Silvério Marques, *A Vitória Traída* (Lisbon, 1977).

2. Kenneth Maxwell, "Portugal and Africa: The Last Empire," in Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 363.

gain ground rapidly. Its proponents campaigned, within Portuguese ranks, to bring to an end a war that they saw as hopeless as well as morally wrong.

Though much remains obscure, these young officers in Guinea-Bissau undoubtedly became a leading influence in forming the Armed Forces Movement which was to overthrow the regime in the following April. Without exaggeration, they came to Portugal's rescue when senior officers and the majority of politicians seemed impotent or utterly demoralized, or simply last-ditch faithfuls in the dictatorship's defense. The immediate consequences of the 1974 coup in Guinea-Bissau proved as much. The fascist-style military commander in Bissau who had succeeded General Spínola, General Bethencourt Rodrigues, was put on a plane for Lisbon and bidden not to return; and there were no further Portuguese-initiated operations after early May. I have given the record elsewhere: Portugal's unconditional recognition of the independence of Guinea-Bissau, during the following September, came in no sense from "strenuous secret diplomacy," or indeed any sort of diplomacy, by the friends and allies of the PAIGC.³ The Portuguese here had fought with courage and stubbornness since 1963, no matter how little Guinea-Bissau might be worth to Portugal in economic terms (and by the late 1960s it had, in fact, become an increasing economic liability), and, as their official figures show, had suffered in Guinea-Bissau relatively higher losses than in Mozambique or in Angola.

But now the Portuguese recognized that they had lost this war; and to this recognition they added the conviction—one, surely, which did them enormous credit—that Portugal had been wrong to impose the war and wrong to persist in it. The territorial assembly of the Armed Forces Movement, meeting in Bissau in June 1974, issued its famous declaration:

The colonized peoples and the people of Portugal are allies. The struggle for national liberation has contributed powerfully to the overthrow of fascism and, in large degree, has lain at the base of the Armed Forces Movement, whose officers have learned in Africa the horrors of a war without prospect [*sem finalidade*], and have therefore understood the roots of the evils which afflict the society of Portugal.⁴

Negotiations for peace were shortly underway, inside Guinea-Bissau as well as outside. Following a secret meeting on 13 July in the southern forest, a calendar was agreed on for the progressive and orderly withdrawal of all Portuguese garrisons and fighting units on Bissau, as a prelude to their evac-

3. Basil Davidson, *No Fist is Big Enough to Hide the Sky: The Liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde* (London, 1981), in extenso.

4. I quote the declaration from *Boletim informativo* (Bissau) 1 (1 June 1974), at that time the organ of the territorial assembly of the Armed Forces Movement in Guinea-Bissau.

uation by sea to Portugal. Spínola, though opposed to this, could not prevent it. Meetings between the two sides meanwhile began in London, but Spínola's reservations brought these quickly into deadlock. As Bragança shows, Spínola still hoped for a partial decolonization, while the PAIGC continued to reply that the alternatives lay between renewed offensives on their part or Lisbon's concession of an unconditional withdrawal.

The negotiations had to be continued, if only because the Portuguese no longer had an army in Guinea-Bissau that was willing to sustain the war. But the negotiations were transferred from London to Algiers at PAIGC request. The PAIGC negotiators had found the British Foreign Office far from sympathetic to them, and they preferred to resume talks on more comfortable ground where there was Algerian support. In Algiers, a settlement was rapidly reached, early in August, through Lisbon's acceptance of the unqualified independence of Guinea-Bissau but also—a substantial point little noticed by anyone outside this arena—of the right of Cape Verdeans to their own self-determination and independence. No outside diplomacy was requested, and none was required.

Essentially the same process led to the independence of Mozambique. The role of Algiers was played in this case by Lusaka; President Kaunda offered Zambia's hospitality to the two sides for as long and as often as they wished to meet. An initial meeting in June brought no progress, as Bragança explains, because the Portuguese delegates had no power to meet FRELIMO's terms, which were for unconditional Portuguese withdrawal. The only noticeable difference from developments in Guinea-Bissau was that the PAIGC had agreed to a temporary truce on "stand-pat" conditions in the field, while FRELIMO refused any form of ceasefire.

My own opinion, which I am not at this stage able to confirm with hard evidence, is that the reason for this difference was primarily that the radical trend within the Armed Forces Movement had become considerably stronger in Guinea-Bissau than in Mozambique. Otherwise the bulk of the Portuguese forces in Mozambique were by this time no more inclined to continue the war than their colleagues in Guinea-Bissau. The result, as in Guinea-Bissau, was that Spínola's plans for a continued but limited colonization, one in which Portugal would retain at least a dominant influence, were frustrated. FRELIMO stood by its terms, and Lisbon had to give way. Speaking to an alarmed and even indignant settler press in Lourenço Marques (soon to become Maputo) as early as 11 May 1974, the Portuguese chief of staff, General Costa Gomes, explained why Lisbon was going to be obliged to give way. "Our armed forces," said the General, "have reached the limits of psycho-neurological exhaustion."⁵

5. Basil Davidson, "The Politics of Armed Struggle," in Davidson, Joe Slovo, and Anthony R. Wilkinson, *Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution* (London and Baltimore, 1976), p. 19.

Thus it came about that Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, with Cape Verde in the wake of Guinea-Bissau, secured their independence thanks to their military success and the political maturity of their leaders. They understood the Portuguese, as could plainly be seen at the time, far better than the Portuguese understood them. Understanding the Portuguese, their skill as well as their democratic conviction, meant that they should take care, in so far as this was possible without endangering their objectives, to reinforce the democratic trend within the Armed Forces Movement. They thus sought to prepare the way not only for peace but also for good relations with a democratic Portugal in the future. Acting in this way, the PAIGC attained its objectives in September 1974, and FRELIMO, for Mozambique, secured the same in the middle of 1975. The complexities of this achievement were many and can be measured only in the "internal record." Although still defective on the Portuguese side, this internal record was provided by the PAIGC in 1981 and is here set forth, for Mozambique, in arresting detail by Aquino Bragança. Because he was most sadly prevented from further work on his chapter by his death, together with President Machel, in the plane crash of October 1986, my part here has been simply to place his chapter within the wider framework which he himself knew so well. Having had the pleasure of his friendship for many years, I believe that he would have agreed fully with what I have written. BASIL DAVIDSON

Taking a different line from that of Kenneth Maxwell on the nature of Portuguese colonialism and the reasons for the downfall of the Portuguese Empire,⁶ this chapter introduces complementary information to illustrate the specificity of the transfer of power in Mozambique. There were two clear positions about the handover of power. Spínola's position was part of a coherent and well-developed project; in essence, Spínola believed that it was necessary to democratize Portugal to decolonize it, and he succeeded in winning the support of the major anti-fascist parties for this policy by actually taking some effective steps toward a democratic order. On the other hand, FRELIMO's position, which was different, was based on the systematic analysis not only of the Mozambican and southern-African context but also of such struggles as those in Vietnam and in Algeria. FRELIMO's analysis of the Evian talks before the independence of Algeria led to a determination to avoid any ambiguities over the question of the transfer of power. Well aware that Spínola's concept of decolonization implied the imposition of a neocolonial order in a future independent Mozambique, FRELIMO took the line that decolonization was a necessary precondition for democratization, and not the other way round.

6. "Portugal and Africa: The Last Empire," in Gifford and Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa*, pp. 337-85.

Between these two well-defined positions lay the Armed Forces Movement of the young Portuguese captains, which as a whole lacked any kind of coherent revolutionary or anti-colonial ideology but which was permeated by a deep and unshakable longing for peace. After the coup d'état of 25 April 1974 the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) lost its momentum, and its coherence evaporated. Nevertheless, the MFA was able to find a cause to fight for, thanks to the intransigence of the liberation movements. The MFA wanted to finish the war but had no means at hand to achieve its objective; the crucial moment was reached when elements within the MFA began to see FRELIMO's position as providing a modality for actually bringing the fighting to an end without giving ground to Spínola and the forces he represented. Alliances were forged to fight against Spínola's neocolonial project, and these led to his eventual neutralization and downfall, and finally to the unambiguous independence of Portugal's African colonies, an independence without decolonization, an independence without the imposition of a neocolonial regime.⁷

The 25th of April 1974. General António da Silva Spínola is the new holder of power in Lisbon. The former commander of the army of occupation in Guinea-Bissau had received power from the hands of Professor Marcello Caetano, former prime minister in the overthrown government. He had promised Caetano that he would not "let power fall into the streets,"⁸ that is to say into the hands of the "anti-system" leftists, who had been accused by the ideologists of the old regime of advocating "the abandonment of Portugal's African colonies."

This was the last demand of the heir of António de Oliveira Salazar. It was Caetano's last chance to see his policy of "evolution in continuity" come true, a policy that he had advocated as a solution to the serious crisis that the country and the regime had been living through. But what an irony of fate—this handover of power had been accomplished with the authorization of the "young captains" of the MFA, who had overthrown the colonial-fascist regime precisely to put an end to what they called "these unjust and unsustainable wars in so-called Portuguese Africa."

In a short appeal to the nation as the new head of the Junta of National Salvation, televised only hours after the handover, Spínola kept the promise that he had made and defined the new regime's first priority: "to guarantee the sovereignty of the nation in its multi-continental form" (that is to say, of course, in less rhetorical terminology, to secure the integrity of Portugal's African empire).

7. Research that I am presently conducting in Maputo and Lisbon has enabled me to consult documentation of Portugal that will clarify some of these issues. Important documents of the Armed Forces Movement have been published in Portugal since 1974. President Samora Machel, with great generosity, allowed me access to some of his personal archives and notes.

8. Dominique de Roux, "Comment s'est rendu Caetano?" *Le Figaro*, 28 Apr. 1974.

The African plan of Spínola and his generals envisaged an immediate cease-fire, under which the nationalist movements would "lay down their arms and pass over to a struggle of ideas, like any other existing legal party," within the practical framework of a multi-continental "Portuguesism." This was the formulation offered by General Francisco Costa Gomes, then chief of staff of the Portuguese Army, and number two in the junta, at a press conference in Lourenço Marques on 13 May 1974.⁹ The other parties to which Costa Gomes referred had already begun to appear on the African scene. Some had emerged at the end of the Caetano period, others after 25 April; but all had the encouragement of the colonial administration, the blessings of the Lisbon government, and the support of the neighboring regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa.

It was of these parties that the new Portuguese head of state was thinking when he declared that "the future of the Overseas Provinces must be decided by all those who consider that those lands belong to them." This was an appeal for the use of a referendum (an idea which Spínola had first raised in his famous book *Portugal and the Future*), to find out whether Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau wanted to belong to a "commonwealth" of future African Brazils, a Luso-African federation centered on Lisbon. Unfortunately, continued Spínola, today's Africans "are not yet ready to decide their own future," and so it was necessary to prepare them. This was a task which Portugal had to assume, perhaps even for "an entire generation."

In the meantime it was necessary to consolidate a "strong centre of power" in Portugal, and to "neutralize" the nationalist movements' possible future allies there, namely the MFA and the anti-fascist parties. Spínola also planned to win over African public opinion in the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and perhaps even the socialist countries of the Soviet bloc, to support his policy of an immediate cease-fire, against the stubborn intransigence of the nationalist movements. This was seen as the keystone of a complex process of decolonization in Africa, which would extract Portugal from the isolation in which it found itself and would in turn isolate the nationalist parties, obliging them to lower their sights.

Spínola's first priority was to consolidate power in Portugal. The big anti-fascist parties—the Socialist party (PS) of Mario Soares, and the Communist party (PCP) of Alvaro Cunhal—did not differ at that time in their general outlook. The PCP had played a central role in the creation of an anti-fascist consciousness in Portugal before the coup, and for much of the time had struggled alone. In a joint communiqué, issued a few months before 25 April, both parties took an unequivocal position on the colonial question.¹⁰

9. *Diário de Notícias* (Lisbon), 15 May 1974.

10. *Comunicado comm.* (Paris, Sept. 1973).

They demanded "an end to the colonial war and negotiations for *immediate independence* for the peoples of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique."

But now the situation had changed. The fascist regime had been overthrown, and massive popular support for the coup had forced the generals to dismantle, as rapidly as possible, the repressive structures of the old regime, such as the PIDE/DGS, the sinister Portuguese Gestapo.

Spínola knew that both the PCP and the PS were inclined to make certain concessions to his idea of a "strong centre of power" in exchange for the establishment of a certain margin of legality.¹¹ He was worried about the formation of a provisional government. The candidates—like the liberal Catholic Professor Miller Guerra—put forward by the MFA to head the government said that they supported the idea of giving top priority to ending the colonial wars. They were turned down by the head of the junta; he already had in mind a man he trusted for that position, the old "anti-fascist" lawyer Palma Carlos, a leading figure in Portuguese freemasonry. But the participation of the big anti-fascist parties in government was forced on Spínola in various ways. Mario Soares, general secretary of the Socialist party, had already accepted. He was to be the foreign minister and Spínola's special ambassador to the Socialist International. Such an "opening" to Europe was necessary to break out of the isolation that the old regime had maintained around itself.

At no point, however, did the PCP's spokesmen raise the question of decolonization as one of their principal objectives and priorities. Why, therefore, asked the general secretary of the PS, could the PCP not be considered for a role as a partner in government? There remained a serious difficulty. Although Alvaro Cunhal was participating in the government, Spínola, staunchly anti-Communist, wanted to give his party the task of controlling the turbulent working class, a sector that obviously felt no sympathy whatsoever for Portugal's new leader.

Nonetheless, Spínola had plenty of reasons for satisfaction. He would be able to remain in charge of the decolonization process—to take place along the lines he had defined—if he could only succeed in neutralizing the young captains of the MFA, who continued to oppose him vigorously on this question.

The positions adopted by the head of the military junta did not come as a surprise to the African nationalists. Spínola's relations with large industrial groups such as CUF holdings or the Champalimaud Group were public knowledge. These enterprises had been the tentacles of the old regime in

11. The PCP also exerted pressure for the earliest possible diplomatic recognition of the USSR. *Le Monde*, 6 June 1974.

the colonies, and they were now looking forward to the unfettered exploitation of Mozambique in new forms and within a new framework of neocolonialism.

The neocolonial theses that Spínola wanted to put into practice were expounded in his much-discussed volume, *Portugal and the Future*,¹² and were denounced in an issue of *Mozambique Revolution*, FRELIMO's English-language journal. It was a plan with a Gaullist flavor, drawn up by a Portuguese Bismarck, historically ten years too late, playing with words to camouflage an operation that was intended to establish the white minority in a hegemonic position in a future state, linked directly to the metropole, whose economic interests would thus be assured. FRELIMO needed to understand the reasons that led the progressive captains of the MFA to hand over power to a junta of reactionary generals—generals, moreover, who did not bother to hide their firm determination to continue the “dirty” colonial wars in Africa. How to interpret this series of unusual and apparently contradictory events?

The essential point, for the Executive Committee of FRELIMO, meeting in Dar es Salaam on 3 May 1974 in a special session to discuss the new situation in Portugal, was to continue the war effort to liberate the country and to reaffirm yet again the principles that had guided the struggle, as well as the conditions that could bring a peaceful solution to the ten-year war. The final communique of this meeting stated:

For the Mozambican people under the leadership of FRELIMO, the problem of the correct definition of the enemy has always been a central question. It is not the Portuguese people, also victims of fascism, who are the enemies of the Mozambican people, but *the Portuguese colonial system*. It was the growing discontent of the Portuguese people with the colonial war which led to the growth of the conviction among a large part of the Armed Forces, that they were not defending the interests of the people. If our struggle will contribute to the struggle of the Portuguese people against Fascism, we can only congratulate ourselves.

But just as the Portuguese people possess an incontestable right to independence and democracy, these same rights must not be denied to the Mozambican people. We are fighting for these essential and elementary rights. The objectives of FRELIMO are total independence for the people of Mozambique, and the destruction of Portuguese colonialism.

12. *Portugal e o seu futuro* (Lisbon, 1974, and reprints); see also his later work, *Pais sem rumo* (Lisbon, 1978).

In drawing conclusions from this important statement, Samora Machel, president of FRELIMO, noted that "independence is not negotiable. It is an inalienable right of the Mozambican people. Nevertheless, we are ready to discuss the modalities of the transfer of sovereignty to the Mozambican people, of whom FRELIMO is the sole legitimate representative."

On 9 May 1974 the president of the United Nations Decolonization Committee, the Tanzanian Salim Ahmed Salim, was asked by the nationalist movements of the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (COMCP), publicly to question "the absence of a declaration from the junta affirming their intention of bringing about a genuine decolonization." But Salim was definite about what had to be done; in order "not to have any equivocation which might lead the world to believe that Portugal's African policy had undergone a mere tactical change, but not a substantial one," the new Portuguese regime had first "to enter immediately into negotiations with the liberation movements recognised by the OAU, to bring colonialism to an end." Second, it had to "recognise the legitimate right of the peoples of Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau to self-determination and independence, and take concrete measures to put this right into effect."

On 10 May, the foreign ministers of Tanzania, Congo Republic, Zambia, and Zaire met in Dar es Salaam with the African nationalist movements recognised by the OAU to decide a common position toward the new regime in Lisbon. "The time has come," they stated in a joint communiqué, "for General Spínola to make a categorical declaration, indicating that Portugal accepts the principle of national independence for Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique."

But the new Portuguese head of state was not prepared to give in and sought the support of African states within the OAU for his policy of an immediate cease-fire. Without this condition, he said, it would not be possible to begin the complex process of decolonization.

In truth, as we have seen, Spínola wanted to break out of the isolation that he had inherited from Caetano's Portugal by tempting away the natural allies of the nationalist movements of the CONCP and forcing them to negotiate on his terms. Spínola was relying on Léopold Senghor, the president of Senegal, his friend and confidant, to rally the moderate wing of the OAU. Senghor knew the ideas of the new Portuguese head of state well, and claimed that Spínola understood and respected the ideas of "négritude" of the nationalist movements. How could he therefore now be mistrusted? In addition, General Gowon, president of "weighty" Nigeria and then president of the OAU, and with whom Spínola had kept up a friendly correspondence, did not doubt that the positions that his Portuguese colleague was defending reflected "a new spirit in the relations between Portugal and the African countries."

But at the Mogadishu summit of 13 June, the "moderate" group of Senghor and company was defeated. African leaders, supporting FRELIMO's positions, decided to make the reopening of diplomatic relations with Portugal conditional on the recognition by Portugal of the right of her colonies to independence. The OAU turned down Spínola's proposals, since "no cease-fire will be possible," in the words of the Somali president Siad Barre, "while Lisbon refuses to recognise the right to independence of the countries under her colonial rule."

At this point Zambia started to play an important role. Portugal's colonial wars had had serious consequences for the Zambian economy: its copper moved with difficulty along railway lines that passed through or near the war zones to the ports of Lobito in Angola and Beira in Mozambique. President Kenneth Kaunda had tried in vain to arrive at an agreement with Caetano about a negotiated solution to the national liberation wars. After 25 April, his roving ambassador Mark Shona went yet again to the Portuguese capital and returned convinced that the new Portuguese head of state genuinely wanted peace. FRELIMO's leaders accepted in principal the need for negotiations. When they were contacted by the Zambian authorities, they agreed to meet the Portuguese in Zambia, even though Spínola's proposals as such did not merit much serious consideration.

Mario Soares led the Portuguese delegation, which stayed in Lusaka from 4 to 6 June. The Socialist party leader went to Lusaka with a well-defined mandate from Spínola "to make a general appreciation of the situation and if possible to agree on a cease-fire. . . . I cannot, unfortunately, go any further," he said, "for the Minister of Foreign Affairs is not the exclusive holder of power. There exists in Portugal today a complex balance of forces which we socialists cannot ignore."

But the socialist leader did not play strictly by the rules of the game that Spínola wanted to impose on him. At Lusaka airport he paid generous homage to Eduardo Mondlane, "founder of the Mozambican nation and first president of FRELIMO, assassinated by enemies of the Mozambican and Portuguese peoples." Later he broke with protocol and created a positive atmosphere for the negotiations by warmly embracing FRELIMO's president, Samora Machel, in the conference room at State House. He also refused to speak to COREMO (the Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique), a puppet organization (to use Soares's own expression), which even though it was recognized by its host, Kaunda, had actually been launched by the Portuguese colonial administration. COREMO wanted to assume the mantle of another FRELIMO and negotiate with the new Portugal. Soares declared:

I am here to speak to those fighting inside the country. The new Portugal sincerely desires to put an end to the wars which it inherited from

the old colonial-fascist regime. In Mozambique it is only FRELIMO which is fighting on the battlefield and we will only talk to them.

This recognition, by the leader of the Portuguese delegation, of FRELIMO as the only representative of the Mozambican people in talks with Portugal opened a breach in Spínola's policy. Nonetheless, Soares still tried to convince the Mozambicans at the negotiating table of the necessity for an "immediate cease-fire, *de jure* or *de facto*, as happened in Guinea-Bissau," so that afterward the protagonists could talk about other subjects.

"We will not stop shooting," replied Samora Machel, "until the problems that made us open fire have been resolved correctly." For Soares this statement had serious implications. He warned that if FRELIMO wanted an unconditional surrender by the Portuguese armed forces in Mozambique, President Spínola had the support of a significant part of the MFA and would not accept such rigid and maximalist positions. If the war was to continue, the Portuguese government might have to appeal to the United Nations, with tragic consequences—the internationalization and Vietnamization of the conflict. Machel countered that the internationalization of the conflict "would be an historic abdication of responsibility by Portugal, and would serve neither the interests of Portugal nor of Mozambique."

Soares tried, without much conviction, to bring up the question of a plebiscite, a subject dear to Spínola's heart, reassuring his listeners that he would "undertake to make sure that FRELIMO would triumph!" At this point Major Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho broke his silence. Carvalho was the brains behind the planning of the 25 April coup and had been included in the delegation at the last minute, ostensibly as a military adviser, but also charged by Spínola with the special task of controlling the foreign minister. "I don't understand much about politics, but I assure you that I find myself much closer to FRELIMO than to my General on this issue. Neither I, nor my colleagues in the MFA, made a revolution to defend a plebiscite, or the other ideas which our General advocates in *Portugal and the Future*."

FRELIMO's president had no difficulty in arguing that the plebiscite and the other tricks that Spínola had up his sleeve were simply Caetano's plans resuscitated ten years too late. Whereas they might have succeeded a decade earlier, to follow such a line now, he argued, "would aggravate the Portuguese crisis, bring the colonial army to military defeat, and might even lead to a right-wing coup in Portugal itself." Soares certainly understood Machel's line of argument. Perhaps he wanted to distance himself from the Spínolist position when he signed a joint communiqué with FRELIMO in which he recognized "that the establishment of a cease-fire is conditional on a previous agreement on basic principles."

The Portuguese delegation returned to Lisbon divided and without any

concrete results to show for their pains. Carvalho said he had decided "that if it is necessary to take command again to make a new coup," then he was ready. Soares had begun to doubt the viability of Spínola's whole project, when he disclosed that "without a change in the forces in power in Portugal a rapid solution will not be found to the impasse in the negotiations with the PAIGC and with FRELIMO."

In fact, the eight hours of frank and understanding talks in Lusaka had not been in vain.

Samora Machel, who had sent one of his closest collaborators to Lisbon, was well aware that the huge demonstrations of 1 May had opened a new phase in Portuguese politics. The events of 25 April could no longer be viewed as a simple coup, even though they were not yet a revolution. The views of the Portuguese masses would have to be taken into account. This popular entry into Portuguese politics had isolated the Spínola wing even more from the armed forces in general. Machel also knew that the point of conflict that separated Spínola's military junta from most of the captains of April was the colonial question, and not democratization at home. It was here that the "conflict of the system" was laid out, here that the armed forces' cohesion was lost, here that the base for a future democratic and pacific Portugal was ruined.

The two rival groups presented different solutions to the crisis. Although the majority of the captains were not convinced anti-colonialists, Spínola's dream of a return to Africa was, for them, a nightmare. This difference led to convulsions within the MFA, which had begun as a temporary organization but had grown stronger precisely because of the pressures created by the long-standing military stalemate in the colonies.

Spínola sensed the danger and tried to neutralize the rebels, sending them off to the barracks after having rebuilt the hierarchical structure of the armed forces, which the coup had practically destroyed. This maneuver failed. The captains adopted semi-clandestine methods of work and turned themselves into an effective second center of power, directed by a political organ called the Committee for the Coordination of the Program (CCP).

The CCP did not hide its opposition to the need for a "strong center of power" stressed by Spínola and his colleagues and was encouraged by the rejection of Spínola's federalist proposals by the African nationalist movements. It also had the support of the "regional" MFAs in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, groups whose knowledge of the terrain inevitably confirmed that "Portugal's African wars cannot be ended by military means." The colonial army, or those parts of it that were still operational were "so tired after a dozen years of distasteful and demobilising warfare, that after 25 April they lost the will to fight."

In Mozambique FRELIMO's guerrilla war, which had already crossed the

Zambezi River, had now, according to a report from the local MFA, reached the south-central region “with the active support of the African population.” It was the country’s Achilles’ heel, the settler heartland, the geographical base of the colonial regime’s support. The white settlers panicked. They had suddenly discovered what the “systematic disinformation about the war” put out by the old regime had kept hidden from them: that independence, with blacks in power, was inevitable. Those who could fled to Portugal in their thousands, while others sought refuge in Rhodesia and South Africa.

The coffers of the colonial state were almost empty. Imports could scarcely be paid for. Prices of goods and services shot up. On 13 August another MFA report from Mozambique revealed that “the foreign exchange account only has funds to cover one week’s imports of top-priority goods. . . . The BNU [the National Overseas Bank] is authorized to issue money without the reserves to cover the issue. . . . Financially the colony is virtually bankrupt.” The war, concluded the report, could not be ended by military means.

The CCP in Lisbon noted that the situation was serious and could not be immediately improved: these circumstances “demand[ed] that control of the process of decolonization should be taken away from Spínola and his generals.” The conflict between Spínola and the MFA could not be reconciled. Confronted by the refusal of the African movements to accept a cease-fire, and the worsening situation on the African fronts, Palma Carlos’s government resigned on 9 July, and the governor-generals of Angola and Mozambique suspended their activities. Guinea-Bissau was at last recognized as an independent republic by Spínola. In July the MFA imposed a constitutional law on the Junta of National Salvation, which included “the recognition by Portugal of the right to self-determination, with all its consequences, including independence.” [Article 2, paragraph 2.]

The victory was FRELIMO’s.

The Executive Committee of FRELIMO took note of the situation and sent for an MFA delegation to come to Dar es Salaam. Spínola tried to oppose the visit, but the chief of the general staff, Costa Gomes, who had just returned from Mozambique, had concluded that “federal projects were a dream of my youth,” that they were already impractical, and that a dialogue with FRELIMO to find a “worthy solution” was indeed necessary.¹³ The Armed Forces Movement’s CCP chose Major Ernesto Melo Antunes for this “delicate mission,” but only after a “long and controversial debate.” He was “the most political among its members” and minister without portfolio in the government just formed by Colonel Vasco Gonçalves. Vasco Gonçalves was also a member of the “Group of Seven” at the top of the Armed Forces Movement, and his

13. Interview with Aquino de Bragança.

government had been formed at the insistence of the leadership of the MFA. Melo Antunes commented, "We have defeated the enemy colonial-fascist regime and we have paid the debt we owed to the African people. Today we can sit at the negotiating table and negotiate with our African counterparts without any kind of complexes."

Spínola tried once again to block this move but eventually gave in. Melo Antunes had drafted the famous *MFA Program*, from which the anti-colonial clauses had been removed by the generals as a condition for permitting the coup. Clearly he was not persona grata with the Portuguese head of state. The negotiations were not going to be easy. This was obvious after the first meeting in Lusaka in June, when Machel had rejected the cease-fire that Spínola and his generals wanted to impose, and had instead stepped up the level of fighting against the forces of occupation. This unorthodox way of seeing things disoriented not only the metropolitan anti-fascist groups, FRELIMO's historical allies, but the rank and file and the leadership of the MFA itself. The MFA was able to understand only with difficulty "that this was the only possible reply of FRELIMO, to what was interpreted as being a manoeuvre by Spínola; a powerful trump card which should be played to create space for negotiation in the last resort."¹⁴

In fact Spínola and Melo Antunes loathed each other. For Melo Antunes, who had been detained and exiled to the Azores on the eve of the coup by the Caetano regime,

It was a grave mistake to invite Spínola to assume the leadership of the new regime, all the more because his projects for decolonisation had nothing to do with the reasons for the 25 April of the captains, which for all its limitations, never intended to recolonise Angola, Mozambique or Guinea. Our choice would have been General Costa Gomes, with whom the MFA could always work without betraying its principles.¹⁵

But the choice had been made—Spínola, who had practically lost the initiative on the colonial question but who stayed on as head of state and could not be ignored. Melo Antunes was duly chosen to go to Dar es Salaam, with the full support of the Portuguese national committee for decolonization; he remained in Tanzania from 30 July to 2 August. Spínola saw no objections to recognizing the right of the Mozambican people to independence or to the principle of the transfer of power. But he showed serious reservations regarding the public recognition of FRELIMO, and he insisted on a secret protocol in

14. Interview with Melo Antunes entitled "Processo de descolonização: Melo Antunes rompe o silêncio" *Expresso* (Lisbon), 7 Feb. 1979.

15. For Costa Gomes's own views see his *Sobre Portugal: dialogos com Alexandre Manuel* (Lisbon, 1979).

which the Front would be recognised as the Mozambican people's legitimate representative, without prejudice to the negotiations that would follow. Was this a new maneuver by Spínola?

The general's insistence on a *secret* protocol recognising FRELIMO was apparently based, said Melo Antunes, on Portugal's desire to prevent South Africa and Rhodesia from contesting, at the international level, the legitimacy of such a recognition. Such a contestation might depart from Western "bourgeois-democratic preconceptions" and would create difficulties in Europe for the new Portuguese regime. It was therefore necessary, first, to prevent South Africa and Rhodesia from using the formal pretext of illegitimacy for a military intervention in Mozambique, which would try to realize the old colonial dream of cutting Mozambique in two along the Zambesi. Second, it was essential to prevent the use of the argument of "betrayal," through a "surrender and shameful handover," by the racist and colonial minority in Mozambique or by the most reactionary elements in Portugal, who could cause serious problems of public disorder in Mozambique and serious political difficulties in Portugal.

Machel had no difficulty in showing that when Spínola sent Soares to Lusaka he was simply playing for time, for a necessary breathing space during which puppet parties in Mozambique could be organized. Indeed, such parties now conveniently began to appear and to claim representation in the dialogue with Portugal, within the federalist project. According to the FRELIMO president, while Spínola was refusing to recognize the Front and was insisting on a secret protocol, he was persisting in his original policy, and at the same time attempting to cover up his contacts with the Portuguese adventurer Jorge Jardim, Salazar's confidant and man in Mozambique. The South African-Rhodesian conspiracy, which Spínola had referred to, was exactly this "Jardim project," supported by those countries, both of which had been looking for a long time for a Mozambican alternative to FRELIMO.¹⁶ Nonetheless, FRELIMO already knew that the main positions of the MFA were not unfavourable to it and was also aware of the relative isolation of Spínola. The Front decided, therefore, to go through with the negotiations, on the basis of its statement on 3 May 1974 that neither self-determination, nor the independence of Mozambique, nor even the legitimacy of FRELIMO were

16. Thus, when the conversations in Dar es Salaam were almost finished, Uria Simango, the ex-vice president of FRELIMO, put together a constellation of insubstantial organizations with the support of Jorge Jardim. Here he reigned over FRELIMO dissidents who had gone over to the enemy; launching this National Coalition Party (PCN) at a press conference Simango stated, "The PCN wants independence through a democratic process, in which the whole population will be able to express its opinions with peace," insisting that this objective should be achieved through a referendum. *Expresso*, 13 Jul. 1974.

negotiable, and that the only item on the agenda was the means for the transfer of power. "The future of Mozambique is for Mozambicans to decide and they have already decided it by force of arms," said Melo Antunes. "Samora [Machel] has said that independence is not negotiable. It is a natural right of peoples."

Nonetheless, to define the means for the transfer of power was not a linear question. What should the composition of the transitional government be? Did the mandate of the Portuguese high commissioner guarantee the territorial integrity of the country? Who was to be the chief executive? The Portuguese delegation wanted to obtain "maximum guarantees of their legitimate interests for Portuguese residents in Mozambique," a tricky question to deal with, and one that could easily be seen to contain the seeds of future disagreements between Portugal and Mozambique. "Mutual concessions," however, guaranteed FRELIMO "a peaceful transition" on its own terms and Portugal a "neither disadvantageous nor dishonourable situation in the transition period." This decisive meeting produced a document containing the basic concepts and the main lines of the agreement to be negotiated. Would Portugal accept this document as a point of departure for the continuation of the dialogue?

The essential points had already been defined by the first meeting in Dar es Salaam. A bigger delegation, led by Antunes, with the foreign minister, Soares, and the minister of international coordination (formerly the Overseas Ministry), Almeida Santos, as his deputies, was to return to Dar es Salaam from 14 to 17 August and to publish to the world the "secret agreements" between Machel and Antunes. This time the foundation was laid for the final negotiations in Lusaka, where at long last the important cease-fire agreement was signed, the clauses of which were the basis for the political, military, and legal structures of the transition.

18. *The Last Becomes the First:*

The Transfer of Power in Zimbabwe

HASU H. PATEL AND H. H. K. BHILA

There is a vast literature in various disciplines from many regions of the world on such emotion-charged phenomena as imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and the post-colonial state. The radical tradition in this literature appeals to many in the so-called third world because they believe that it accurately conveys the reality of the past and present. Too vast to be dealt with here, this literature refers both to the past and present structural underdevelopment and dependence of the colonial and post-colonial societies in relation to former imperial powers. It explains the incorporation of colonial societies into the economic, social, and political ambit and dominance of the metropolitan powers, a situation that continues, aided and abetted increasingly by the activities of transnational corporations.

Structural incorporation and dependence further suggest that the post-colonial state in the third world exhibits great vulnerability and has restricted choices; that it possesses a fragmented domestic economy because of historic and continuing underdevelopment or through the development of dependent capitalism; and that it harbors comprador elements serving foreign interests.¹ These characteristics are less pervasively true of Zimbabwe than of many other post-colonial states.

Important as the above insights are, and however dominant these characteristics are, dependency analysis has some crucial limitations. The dependency framework concentrates too much on the capacity, willingness, and calculations of the dominant or hegemonic capitalist centers in the interna-

1. See Hasu Patel, "No Master, No Mortgage, No Sale: The Foreign Policy of Zimbabwe," in T. Shaw and Y. Tandon, eds., *Regional Development at the International Level*, vol. 2, *African and Canadian Perspectives* (Lanham, 1985), pp. 220.

tional system; it unnecessarily and unrealistically dismisses small and medium post-colonial states and their ruling classes as in reality having no interest or minds or capacities of their own to pursue their "national interests." By characterizing the post-colonial ruling classes largely as comprador elements it converts yesterday's nationalists into traitors to their own societies. In short, the inherited structural constraints proposed by the dependence theory are such that no possibility of remedial action exists on the part of the newly independent states.

In thinking about dependency one must look closely at the conditions of independence. The attainment of national independence, whether by largely peaceful and constitutional means, as occurred in much of Africa under British dominion, or by mainly an armed struggle, as happened in Zimbabwe, is a crucially important moment in the life of a long-subjugated people. The concrete details of the national liberation struggle, whether largely peaceful or largely violent, need to be taken into account if one is to understand the even more arduous and long drawn-out struggle for domestic structural transformation.

Even with its limitations the radical perspective described above illuminates an ever-present reality for most of the people in the so-called third world. In Zimbabwe the progressively increasing radicalization of the people, especially the peasantry, during the Second Chimurenga (the Second War of Liberation) from the mid-1960s to 1980 was in critical measure a function of the growing consciousness over decades of dispossession from land and other resources at the hands of successive settler colonial regimes. The peasants' radicalization was generally carried out by guerrilla cadres and leaders, who themselves progressively became radical as the armed struggle evolved. The mixture of peasant consciousness based on its historic dispossession, the use of spirit mediums, the increasing use of socialist ideology, and the tilt to a real people's war meant that radical solutions to post-independence problems became a part of the expectations about the future. Radical expectations were also augmented by the 1980 general election victory of the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)—ZANU (PF)—and especially by the assumption of the prime ministership of an independent Zimbabwe by Robert Mugabe, who has articulated socialism consistently over a long period.

The argument of this chapter needs to be seen in the light of certain historical landmarks. By the constitution of 1923 Southern Rhodesia became a self-governing colony with internal autonomy. Far from being put on the road to self-government, the territory was thus placed under white settler control. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was formed in 1953. The federal government assumed responsibility for defense, external affairs, European primary and secondary education and all higher education, and immigration.

(The federal government was solely responsible for forty-four items and shared responsibility for thirty-two items on the concurrent list.) The constitution of 1961 included a Declaration of Rights, but even its carefully qualified language proved to be too liberal for the white supremacists. In 1963 the Federation ended, and Southern Rhodesia reverted to the status of a self-governing colony. It also preempted powers that had previously been transferred to the federal government in 1953. This in brief was the background to the state of emergency declared by the prime minister of Rhodesia in 1965. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) suspended constitutional safeguards. In 1970 the Rhodesia of the white supremacists became a republic. Britain declared the government illegal and imposed sanctions. From 1973 onward the white government under Ian Smith discussed a possible settlement with the nationalist forces as well as British proposals for a Constitutional settlement. These negotiations ended in failure. In 1979 the state was renamed Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who represented some African support and had the backing of the white settlers, became prime minister. His government failed to receive international recognition or to bring about the lifting of sanctions. Muzorewa, however, agreed to constitutional talks in London along with the nationalist groups participating in the guerrilla war. At these Lancaster House talks in London Britain finally agreed to resume responsibility for Rhodesia and supervise elections to produce a government that would lead the country to legal independence. A British governor was sent to Salisbury in late 1979. Elections were held in early 1980, and the nationalist forces won an overwhelming majority. Robert Mugabe became prime minister. Zimbabwe was declared an independent republic within the Commonwealth. What were the underlying reasons for this transformation? And what do they reveal about the stakes at issue?

Clues to the answers to these questions can be found in the details of the struggle for liberation. The 1961 constitution that the Zimbabwean African nationalists ultimately rejected was meant as an independence constitution with African advancement over a fifteen-year period. The period 1964–1971, including as it did the disastrous UDI, was a period of essentially bilateral negotiations between Britain and Ian Smith's rebel regime, with Africans marginalized and periodically called in for "consultations." Once UDI had been declared, Britain looked to the United Nations for essential support. The British prime minister, Harold Wilson, persisted in resolving a "constitutional dispute" through bilateral negotiations with Smith as the best way to cut short the struggle between settler attempts at hegemony and African nationalism. The periodic constitutional proposals, those of 1966, 1968, and 1971, were all in fact conducive to white control. Only Smith's myopic folly made him reject the earlier proposals and believe that he could win African

acceptance for what was proposed in 1971. The resounding African veto of 1972 was a rebuff to the Rhodesian Front's hegemonic ambitions, although it did not put an end to them completely.

More than anything else, the armed struggle conducted by the Zimbabwe African National Union/Zimbabwe National Liberation Army (ZANU/ZANLA) and also the Zimbabwe African People's Union/Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZAPU/ZIPRA) increasingly made life difficult for Smith and his cohorts and brought about the intervention of the international community (e.g., the Frontline States, the OAU Liberation Committee, the Commonwealth, the United Nations, and, after the 1974 Portuguese collapse and the South African/American debacle in Angola, the active intervention of South Africa and the United States). The conflict propelled Britain to reassert its responsibility for the transfer of power in Zimbabwe, even though the intervention of South Africa, the United States, and Britain was to ensure that the area did not radicalize itself and become revolutionary. The "road to Lancaster" was full of contradictions within the Liberation Movement and in British, American, South African, and even some Frontline States' policies. Nevertheless, Lancaster would not have happened without the militarization and internationalization of the conflict in Zimbabwe.

The contradictions did not end with the Lancaster House Agreement. The period of transitional administration under Lord Soames from December 1979 to April 1980 was the period during which the Zimbabwe state-to-be was at its most vulnerable. Even though there were constitutional prohibitions against using the seats reserved for whites to put a minority black party or one of two co-equal black parties into power, there was suspicion that Lord Soames was entertaining hopes of an "ABM (Anyone but Mugabe)" policy. Certainly the relations between Lord Soames and Mugabe and ZANU (PF) ranged from uneasy to hostile. Muzorewa-Smith propaganda against Mugabe and ZANU (PF) was vicious; there were bomb attacks and two attempts on Mugabe's life; three separate armies were to be held in check and amalgamated, not to mention the viability and integration of the then existing civil service; there was the possibility of a military coup against a decisively victorious Mugabe government, and it was suspected that General Walls, Smith's chief of combined operations, wanted to nullify Mugabe's overwhelming election victory. In all, a possible bloodbath was in the making. Nevertheless, the landslide victory of ZANU (PF) meant that power was eventually transferred to the very force that Lord Soames and others had hoped would not be its inheritor.

This electoral victory was the outcome of the guerrilla war as fought by ZANU. Initially both ZANU and ZAPU adopted tactics that were highly counterproductive. The guerillas crossed the Zambezi River in large numbers into

inhospitable areas and moved through uninhabited terrain. The need to move in supplies created a "highway" easily detected, leading to severe losses. The involvement of African National Congress (ANC) guerrillas in Rhodesia gave the South African prime minister, John Vorster, a pretext to dispatch South African Police contingents to assist Rhodesia in what was called "border control." South Africa also sent some army regulars to man fast patrol boats on the Zambezi River and supplied helicopters and pilots. As the ZAPU leadership admitted:

We must be the first to say to ourselves that in initiating the armed struggle in Zimbabwe we made many mistakes and suffered setbacks. We had no experience in the matter of arms at all, as the colonial regime had ensured that we had no access to arms. Learning how to use arms, acquiring military skills and embarking on guerrilla warfare were complicated and difficult tasks.²

Both ZANLA and ZIPRA set out to review their tactics, but the two remained quite different armies. ZIPRA was trained mainly by the Russians (largely as a regular army), while ZANLA was trained to a large extent by the Chinese in the manner of a peoples army. It was largely due to the revolutionary activities of ZANLA that the Smith regime and its Anglo-American sympathizers resorted to conference diplomacy. Joshua Nkomo, leader of ZAPU/ZIPRA, implicitly accepts this view when he argues in his biography that his plan was to launch an all-out offensive if the Lancaster House Conference had failed.³ In short, ZAPU did not learn much after the debacle of the mid-1960s.

On the other hand, ZANU learnt many lessons, in particular the lessons of Mao Tse-Tung. ZANU realized that it was pointless to operate in remote areas without the support of the local population. It learned the true art of guerrilla warfare, namely, to move among the people like a fish in water. Particularly the rural masses were essential as a source of information about the enemy's movements and to provide food, recruits, and transport of food and military equipment. The lessons of earlier reverses were clearly spelt out by the late national chairman of ZANU, Herbert Chitepo, in mid-1971. In an interview published in a Danish newspaper, Chitepo said, "It is useless to engage in a conventional warfare with well-equipped Rhodesian and South African troops along the Zambezi."⁴ Speaking at the ZANU biennial conference in Zambia in September 1973, Chitepo proclaimed: "We have tried to correct this tragic error by politicizing and mobilizing the people before mounting any attacks

2. *Political Report on the Central Committee of ZAPU*, p. 6.

3. Joshua Nkomo, *Nkomo: The Story of My Life* (London, 1984), p. 202.

4. Cited in D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War* (Harare, 1981), p. 13.

against the enemy. After politicizing our people, it became easier for them to cooperate with us and identify with our program.”⁵

An adaptation of Mao-Tse Tung’s ideas and those of other revolutionaries (such as Che Guevara and Regis Debray) revolutionized the Zimbabwe struggle in the 1970s. As a result of the experience gained in previous battles, ZANU decided to spend the period 1967–1969 restructuring itself, training and recruiting military cadres. ZANU had learnt that a large army was needed so that reinforcements could easily be dispatched to the war front. The period was also spent acquiring arms and shipping them into enemy territory. In consequence, ZANU sent recruits to China but at the same time established its own training camps in Tanzania. The next important task was to politicize the masses inside Rhodesia. But this could not be done until a proper study of alternative routes to the Zambezi had been made. In 1969 negotiations were initiated with FRELIMO in Mozambique to open the northeast of Rhodesia for military action. Reconnaissance parties were also sent from Botswana and Malawi. The most important development in this exercise was the alliance between ZANU and FRELIMO; the alliance was forged because, although FRELIMO still considered ZAPU as its natural ally, it realized that ZANU, rather than ZAPU, had great support among the people in eastern Rhodesia, that ZANU was prepared to open the northeastern front, and that ZAPU was unprepared and unwilling to operate from Tete along the northeast of Rhodesia. ZANLA cadres fought alongside their FRELIMO counterparts and gained valuable military experience in the process.

The opening of the northeastern route in the early 1970s enabled ZANU to politicize as well as mobilize the masses. The fighting was done mainly in the countryside. The villagers sheltered the guerrillas in their houses and supplied them with information, food, and clothing. For their part, the guerrillas held all-night gatherings at which they discussed the people’s grievances and explained the need to fight the enemy and how to do it. They sang revolutionary songs to raise the morale of the masses. The villagers equipped the cadres with identity cards that enabled the guerrillas to obtain false employment documents. The guerrillas also employed young girls as double agents to elicit information from the police. In this way the cadres won the heart of the peasantry, and a symbiotic relationship developed between the two. Quite often the guerrillas helped the peasants plow their fields and, where possible, also helped with medical treatment. When the guerrillas planned their attacks on enemy forces, they did so with the help of the peasantry. Once perfected, this cooperation proved extremely efficient and decisive in forcing the enemy to the conference table. The youths became more and more vigilant and served as the eyes and ears of the cadres.

5. Ibid.

It would be misleading, however, to portray the relationship between the peasantry and the guerrillas as having been always cordial, because in some cases conflict arose from abuse of their power by some of the guerrillas. Some cadres demanded food and clothing from the peasants, who met these demands from their meager earnings after the sale of a season's harvest; the rich peasants, in particular, fell prey to these demands. In extreme cases some people who were suspected of collaborating with the enemy were killed, to remove the danger as well as to serve as a lesson to the rest.

But one must hasten to add that these were excesses, probably unavoidable in a war situation. Destruction, maiming, and torture characterized both sides. The guerrilla excesses were not sanctioned by the party, and quite often the culprits were severely punished by party officials. Despite these discordant notes, the peasant-guerrilla relationship was excellent, and the peasants played a crucial role in the war of liberation. The transfer of power would have been utterly impossible without their participation. The intensification of the war compelled the enemy to scatter its forces into operational areas, and a shortage of manpower obliged the white settler regime to recruit mercenaries.

The British government inclined to the view that the interests of the white settlers had to be recognized by any settlement. Negotiations with the Rhodesian prime minister, Ian Smith, led in 1971 to a set of proposals to be put to the people of Rhodesia as a whole for their acceptance or rejection. The agreement provided for an increase in the number of the black parliamentary seats but no significant diminution of white power. It further undertook not to enact retrogressive laws in the future, not to retain racist laws, and to observe human rights. The African nationalist leaders were released from jail as a gesture of goodwill, and the two political parties ZANU and ZAPU were able to resuscitate their dormant branches throughout the country. Bishop Abel Muzorewa had been agreed upon as a compromise leader.

In mid-1972 the proposals were overwhelmingly rejected by the black people of Rhodesia. This was the first time that the African majority had been given a decisive voice in the affairs and future of the country—resulting in a loud and resounding African veto of white settler ambitions. It was indeed one of the great traumas heaped on white Rhodesia, and as such was a turning point on the “constitutional road” to independence. In the meantime ZANU concentrated on recruiting and training cadres as well as opening up new routes along the Botswana and Mozambican borders. The revolutionary activities of the ZANLA forces alarmed the white Rhodesians, who in turn influenced the South Africans to serve their cause.

It had become evident by 1974 that the collapse of the white minority regime was at least possible. But the period from December 1974 to 1976 was

characterized by rivalry within the nationalist camp, both within and across parties. After an initial agreement on unity among ZANU, ZAPU, the ANC and FROLIZI, splits and rivalries intensified. Muzorewa increasingly saw himself as a leader; Nkomo broke away from the ANC; the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole tried to maintain leadership of ZANU, and Chitepo was killed in a bomb attack in Lusaka, Zambia, in March 1975. Eventually, in late 1975, the guerrillas and their officers replaced Sithole with Mugabe as leader of ZANU.

In late 1975 the two military wings of ZANU and ZAPU (that is, ZANLA and ZIPRA, respectively) forged a united front, ZIPA (the "third force"), against the enemy to resuscitate the war effort. Rex Nhongo (Tapfumaneyi Mujuru) of ZANLA was army commander, and Nikita Mangena of ZIPRA was political commissar. ZIPA was promoted and welcomed by the Frontline States as a united force for prosecuting the war, which resumed in January 1976. But military unity was short lived. Many ZIPRA forces left the front in anticipation of an agreement between Smith and Nkomo, who had started negotiations in December 1975. ZANLA, however, drew up plans for military action that soon threw the enemy into utter confusion. In some areas ZANLA commanders were amazed to find soft resistance from the enemy's forces, but in the areas where the enemy put up stiff resistance fierce battles were fought.

The ZANLA victories took a heavy toll on the morale of the white settlers. The white minority regime responded by promulgating new army service regulations that made Africans liable to conscription into the army. The impact of ZANLA guerrilla warfare resulted in the emigration of many white settlers, mostly young men who saw the futility of dying for a lost cause. The white settler regime tried in vain to buy off the revolution by the introduction in 1976 of reforms that amounted to an inclusion of four African chiefs into an all-white cabinet. In the meantime it mounted desperate attacks on guerrilla as well as refugee camps. The attack on Nyadzonya refugee camp in Mozambique on 8 September 1976 was a typical example. The guerrillas responded by escalating their attacks.

In 1976 the American secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, attempted to end the war by consulting independent African states. The support of the Frontline States was crucial to the success of American "mediation" because they had some influence on the guerrillas, just as South Africa had some influence on Rhodesia. It should be remembered that the Frontline States were supporting ZIPA at this time. The Kissinger proposals, following British Prime Minister James Callaghan's March 1976 timetable of two years to majority rule, appealed to the Smith regime largely because it desperately needed a breathing space, and because of the acute shortage of manpower and the weakened economy.

The Kissinger proposals of 1976 provided for a Council of State during a

two-year transitional period, comprising an equal number of blacks and whites but with a white chairman. There would be a Council of Ministers with an African prime minister and a majority of African ministers. Law and order and defense were to be left in white hands, sanctions were to be lifted, and the United States was to set up the Zimbabwe Development Fund. Smith would be forced to accept majority rule within two years after 24 September 1976.

Had the deal succeeded, political power would have been transferred to a white-dominated coalition. The lifting of sanctions would have resuscitated the ailing Rhodesian economy, and the white settlers would have been in a better position to resist the guerrilla offensive. Smith used these elements as justification of his acceptance of the Kissinger proposals in his communication to his military forces and political supporters. But this deal between Kissinger and Smith was rejected by the Frontline States, which insisted on Britain carrying out its decolonizing duties. Accordingly, Britain convened the Geneva Conference on 28 October 1976—though the Kissinger proposals constituted the basis of the negotiations.

The Geneva Conference failed, but it inadvertently succeeded in bringing together ZANU and ZAPU into a loose alliance called the Patriotic Front (PF) before the conference. This alliance realistically lasted up to and including the Lancaster House Conference of 1979. The line-up for the “internal settlement” that came into being in 1978 also emerged at Geneva as the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole and Bishop Abel Muzorewa returned to Rhodesia. The latter two, unlike the Patriotic Front, had the support neither of the guerrillas nor of the Frontline States.

The United States and Britain in the meantime put pressure on the PF to accept a modification of the Kissinger proposals known euphemistically at Geneva as the Owen-Young proposals after the British foreign secretary, David Owen, and the American ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young.

The Anglo-American proposals of September 1977 provided for free elections on the basis of one man one vote, a six-month transitional period during which the British Resident Commissioner Lord Carver would rule Zimbabwe, a role for the United Nations, and the establishment of the Zimbabwe Development Fund.⁶

These proposals were discussed at Malta in January 1978. The Malta Conference failed because Britain and the United States were unwilling to recognize the PF's central role in the interim government. The PF argued justifiably that it was the impact of the war that led to the Malta Conference. Meanwhile, the two African politicians who had been rejected by the guer-

6. A. Astrow, *Zimbabwe: A Revolution that Lost Its Way* (London, 1983), p. 111.

rillas and the Frontline States at Geneva, Sithole and Muzorewa, were responding positively to Smith's overtures for what he called an "internal settlement" with moderate African leaders. Also included in the internal settlement discussions was Chief Jeremiah Chirau, who once had been a cabinet minister in the Smith government. He had subsequently resigned to form his own party, the Zimbabwe United People's Organization (ZUPO), with the blessing of the Rhodesian Front party, which desperately needed to give some semblance of an African opposition party in Parliament. In the negotiations that ensued between Smith's Rhodesian Front party, Muzorewa's UANC, and Sithole's ZANU, the latter two were reduced to making enormous concessions to the Rhodesian Front. The agreement signed on 3 March 1978 provided, among other things, an Executive Council with rotating chairmen but with Smith as prime minister during the transition, twenty-eight seats reserved for whites in the Legislative Assembly for ten years or the lifetime of two parliaments, protection of property rights, retention of the existing security forces and the police, and the "independence" of the judiciary.

The PF and the masses of Zimbabwe would not agree to an agreement that left control of the army and police in the hands of the whites. The settlement failed because some supporters of both Sithole and Muzorewa became disillusioned and pulled out of the government. More important, neither the Reverend Sithole nor Bishop Muzorewa could end the guerrilla war.

It is true that under the internal settlement of 3 March 1978 the elections held during April 1979 were, for the first time in Rhodesia, based on universal adult suffrage and resulted in a black prime minister. These two facts were historic events in themselves because monopoly white power was no longer possible. Nevertheless, the white settlers continued to hold the real instruments of power such as the security and police forces, the judiciary and the civil service; and the PF decisively rejected both the internal settlement and the 1979 elections.

The guerrilla war had gathered momentum in the second half of the 1970s as a result of the restructuring of ZANU, with Josiah Tongogara as chief of defense of ZANLA forces and head of the Military High Command. ZAPU also became active during the second half of the 1970s. From 1970 to 1976 ZAPU played very little part in the guerrilla war. They were in a state of disarray following their defeats in 1967 by a combination of Rhodesian and South African forces. They took the opportunity of consolidating their position by sending recruits outside the country on extended courses to the Soviet Union, Cuba, and North Korea. In mid-1976 there was a gradual drift of ZIPRA elements from Mozambique to Francistown in Botswana. The more dedicated of them collected recruits as they went through enemy territory and inflicted heavy casualties on Rhodesian forces. At this time ZAPU had been

told by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Liberation Committee that financial support would be withheld if it did not become more active in the war. As a result, ZAPU again infiltrated enemy territory across the Zambezi River.

In 1977 ZANU reorganized the military structures of ZANLA to render them better able to pursue the war. The reorganization involved the enlargement of the Central Committee, which then included the military and political leadership. This created a greater cohesion between the party and its military wing. The enlarged Central Committee worked out policies and programs for the war over the next three or four years. In the meantime mobilization had been carried out, and the masses supported the armed struggle. The guerrilla onslaught was so effective that the enemy responded by mounting preemptive attacks in Mozambique, where the Chimoio (the ZANLA HQ) and Tembue camps were being attacked beginning 23 November 1977; these attacks resulted in the deaths of more than a thousand people. Additionally, a year later, enemy forces attacked the camp outside Lusaka, killing more than two hundred people on 18 October 1978, and later there were other attacks in Zambia. The enemy even supplied poisoned clothing that claimed a large number of ZANLA lives, but the war continued unabated. The enemy's lines of communication had been greatly disrupted, trade was considerably interrupted, the currency had to be devalued, the enemy's losses in terms of both personnel and military equipment had risen, and, coupled with other military expenditure, the enemy was forced to spend about Z\$600,000 a day on the war.

From the mid-1970s the strength of the guerrilla forces left the enemy with no choice but to negotiate. It is in this context that the discussions concerning Rhodesia at the Lusaka Commonwealth Conference must be viewed. The conference was held from 1 to 7 August 1979.

The conferees came to Lusaka well aware of the issue involved. The Muzorewa regime hoped to win recognition and the lifting of sanctions. This was rejected outright by the PF and the Frontline States. Indeed, other Commonwealth countries took the same position and demanded that there should be elections in which the PF could participate freely and a restructuring of power and authority. The British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, also gave assurances about her commitment to black majority rule in Rhodesia. It must be recalled, however, that Thatcher's advent to power in May 1979 had heralded the possibility that she might lift sanctions on Rhodesia and recognize the Muzorewa regime, and thus she needed to be persuaded. In this process Lord Carrington, the British foreign secretary, together with his Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials, after receiving general support from the Carter administration, and Sir Sridath Ramphal, the Com-

monwealth secretary-general, played an important role.⁷ The Lusaka Conference was crucial in that it adopted several resolutions that subsequently became the basis of discussions at the Lancaster House Conference.

The main features of the Lusaka Agreement of 1979 included independence for Rhodesia on the basis of genuine black majority rule, the calling of a conference to be attended by all parties, British acceptance of their responsibility to decolonize Rhodesia, a constitution with minority safeguards, free and fair elections, a cease-fire before the elections, and the lifting of sanctions.

The last stage in the transfer of power in Zimbabwe was the Lancaster House Conference that opened on 10 September 1979 and ended on 15 December of the same year. The conference addressed itself to three distinct but related issues, notably the constitution, the transitional arrangements, and the cease-fire. As far as the constitution was concerned, the British produced a draft that provided for an executive prime minister and twenty reserved seats for white settlers. This arrangement was rejected by the PF, which preferred an executive president who would also be head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces. The PF plan also made no provision for special parliamentary seats for whites, for constitutionally entrenched procedures, or for the protection of private property or pension rights. However, the PF finally accepted a plan that provided for dual citizenship, reserved seats for whites, a bill of rights, continuity in the judiciary, public services, police force and defence force, a Parliament comprising a Senate and a House of Assembly. Certain clauses were entrenched also by the requirements of special parliamentary majorities for any proposed changes.

The most controversial aspect of the draft constitution affected the land. The British position was that all private property should be protected from compulsory acquisition and that any legal acquisition required immediate and adequate compensation remittable outside the country. The PF position was that the armed struggle was waged in order to recover lost lands of the people; therefore the future government should have the right to acquire land that initially had been taken without compensation and distribute it to the landless. The PF held that this was particularly justifiable under certain conditions: if land lay idle and unused; if land had no market price; if to buy land would be beyond the fiscal ability of the new state; and if repatriation of compensation funds would ruin the economy. A compromise solution was reached when the British and the Americans gave assurances about a mul-

7. J. Davidow, *A Peace in Southern Africa* (Boulder, 1984), pp. 27–30.

tinational effort to assist in land, agricultural, and economic development programs.

The second stage in this process of the transfer of power involved arrangements during the transitional period. This provided for direct British assumption of total political power in Rhodesia in the person of the governor. Under this arrangement the governor would enjoy executive as well as legislative powers. The Rhodesian Army and Police as well as the commanders of the PF guerrillas would be responsible to him.

The third and most difficult stage was that of cease-fire. A brief examination of the positions taken by the delegations should enable us to appreciate the issues involved. The PF proposals involved an eight-man transitional Governing Council (four PF and four British-Rhodesian regime members) plus a British chairman. Further, commissions with similar equality of members would control the army, police, public service, and judiciary. Additionally the PF wanted United Nations officials and a U.N. peacekeeping force.

The Muzorewa delegation did not present a transitional plan because it wanted to organize the elections and administer Rhodesia during any period of transition. The British position envisaged a resumption of direct control over the existing administration through the appointment of a governor with full power. He would be assisted by an election commissioner in the holding of elections. These were to be witnessed by Commonwealth observers, and the commissioner would be assisted by an Advisory Council comprising representatives of each party. Opposing military forces' commanders would be responsible to the governor for the maintenance of the cease-fire. Law and order was to be maintained by the existing police force, which was to be responsible to the governor.

In spite of disagreements the conference went ahead to discuss the mechanics of implementing the cease-fire agreement. The United Kingdom agreed to pay, house, and feed the guerrillas during the transitional period. The assembly points for the PF guerrillas were to be situated close to their operational areas and distant from the bases of the Rhodesian Army. A Commonwealth monitoring force, increased to twelve hundred men to accommodate the PF, was to provide nominal protection at these assembly points. It was also agreed that to initiate the cease-fire the Rhodesian forces would initially move near their bases so that the PF could begin to assemble their forces.

Lord Soames was appointed on 7 December 1979 as governor of Rhodesia for the interim period, and after his arrival in Salisbury on 12 December 1979 (before the conclusion of the Lancaster House Conference) Smith's UDI

was finally ended with the restoration of legality and the lifting of sanctions. On 17 December the PF signed the Constitutional Conference report and on 21 December all parties formally signed the cease-fire.

The Lancaster House Conference of 1979 ended with what earlier that year had seemed impossible to attain, namely, an internationally recognized settlement of the "Rhodesian constitutional dispute," which in fact had been a war between African nationalism and white colonialism. The final stage in the transfer of power from the white settlers to the majority black population involved elections. Campaigning began shortly after the cease-fire agreement, with spectacular opening salvos by Robert Mugabe, president of ZANU (PF), and by Joshua Nkomo, president of ZAPU, the latter adopting the same name Patriotic Front. On his return to Salisbury on 13 January 1980, Nkomo addressed an enthusiastic crowd of between 100,000 and 150,000 supporters in Highfield township. Mugabe returned to Salisbury (subsequently Harare) on 27 January 1980 and was greeted by an even larger crowd, described at the time in the newspapers as the largest rally ever held in the country. Lord Soames's relationship with Mugabe personally and ZANU (PF) generally ranged from strain to utter distrust. Soames repeatedly accused ZANU (PF) of intimidation and threatened to disqualify it from the election. In addition, there were two assassination attempts on Mugabe. Despite these and many other handicaps, the election was held in late February 1980. Almost one million more Africans voted in this election than in the internal elections the previous year, and ZANU (PF) won an overwhelming victory, capturing fifty-seven of the eighty "black" seats, while PF (the old ZAPU) won twenty seats, and UANC of Bishop Muzorewa won only three seats in the House of Assembly.

Mugabe, the "Jongwe juggernaut"—Jongwe, the cock, being ZANU (PF)'s election symbol—ended any hope of an "ABM (Anyone but Mugabe)" policy. A general acquiescence in the decisive outcome of the election as the price of putting an end to the war worked against any last-minute attempts to deny Mugabe his victory. The despair and foreboding of the white settlers before the election results were announced on 4 March 1980 had been markedly abated by Mugabe's victory broadcast on 4 March 1980, which proclaimed reconciliation as a major policy of the incoming government. Mugabe then appointed General Walls, the head of the security forces, as head of the new integrated army in the making.

ZANU (PF) and the new PF (the old ZAPU) had separately contested the election. Nkomo was later offered the presidency of Zimbabwe, which he refused. Nonetheless, Mugabe gave ZAPU four cabinet seats and three junior ministerships and included two whites in the cabinet.

At the stroke of midnight on 17 April 1980, Prince Charles, representing

the decolonizing power, handed the instruments of office to Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister. Thus closed the long and arduous ordeal of the "transfer of power" in Zimbabwe: "And the last shall be first" (Matthew 19:30). Those who had held out the longest for a real transfer of power had finally triumphed. With political independence, the opportunity arose for the first time for internal political, economic, social, psychological, and cultural transformation. The price for independence had been high for a population of about eight million. About one and a half million people had become refugees or displaced persons, and about forty thousand people had died; thousands of clinics, schools, bridges, and dip-tanks had been destroyed. Nevertheless, the relatively relaxed race relations fairly soon after April 1980 meant that one had to pinch oneself to remember that the country had recently passed through a bitter and bloody war between white settler colonialism and African nationalism.

Even though power was "transferred" to ZANU (PF) and British, American, South African, and settler intentions were not allowed to be victorious, criticisms have been raised by what we might term "the ultra-Left" that Zimbabwe has sold out to the forces of imperialism, that in the end especially British-American intentions have held the upper hand.⁸ This is too neat and simplistic a verdict so soon after Zimbabwean independence; perhaps this view may well prove right in the long term, but the revolutionizing potential within the Zimbabwean situation should not be underestimated or dismissed so quickly.

8. See, e.g., A. Callinicos, *Southern African After Zimbabwe* (London, 1981), and A. Astrow, *Zimbabwe: A Revolution that Lost Its Way* (London, 1983).

19. *Botswana and the Survival of Liberal Democracy in Africa**

MICHAEL CROWDER

Botswana is unique in Africa as the only state that has effectively maintained intact the constitution whereby power was transferred by its former colonial rulers.¹ Twenty years after independence this constitution appeared to be under no immediate threat of change, either explicit or implicit. Ruled by Britain as the Bechuanaland Protectorate from 1885 to 1966, when it became an independent republic, Botswana scrupulously maintained the Westminster-style parliamentary democracy that was seen by Britain as the constitutional panacea for the independence of all its African colonies. Where all other British African territories transformed themselves into one-party states with executive presidencies or had their constitutions suspended as a result of military intervention, Botswana adhered strictly not only to the letter of the constitution it inherited from its colonial rulers but also to the spirit of

* I am grateful to Neil Parsons, Patrick Molutsi, Jim Polhemus, and Kevin Shillington for helpful comments on an earlier version of this chapter. I also owe a great debt to Willie Henderson and other participants in the excellent Botswana Conference he organized at the University of Birmingham on 27 Sept. 1985 for a number of the ideas I have developed here. For general background see Jack Parson, *Botswana: Liberal Democracy and the Labor Reserve in Southern Africa* (Boulder and London, 1984), and Christopher Colclough and Stephen McCarthy, *The Political Economy of Botswana: A Study of Growth and Distribution* (London, 1980).

1. The only substantive changes in the constitution have related to the position of the president, first, when he ceased to be an elected member of Parliament and, second, with regard to the method of his election. In the latter case the amendment was in fact toward a more "democratic" method of election. Thus, in terms of the Constitution (Second Amendment) Bill, 1969 published on 21 Feb. 1969, if there were only one validly nominated and qualified candidate for the presidency, the declaration of the result of his or her election had to await ascertainment of whether the candidate had the support of the majority of the National Assembly at the ensuing general election.

that constitution by ensuring freedom of speech and press, subject only to the laws that were promulgated by those rulers. As of 1985 it had never appeared on Amnesty International's list of countries with political prisoners.² The previous year five opposition parties had campaigned freely in the general election. There had been no attempted coups. The only former British dependency that approached Botswana in its concern to maintain Western-style liberal democracy was the Gambia, which was subject to a violent attempted coup in 1981 and modified its independence constitution twice, first when it became a republic in 1970 and second when in the wake of the failed coup it formed a confederation with Senegal in 1982.

Why should Botswana have followed such a different path from other African countries? And what appeared to be the chances of its maintaining this liberal democracy in the context of the upheavals in its neighbor South Africa, with which its fate has always been so inextricably linked?

On the face of it, in 1966 Botswana seemed the most unlikely of the newly independent African countries to make a success of its independence. It was one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of less than \$50 per annum.³ The British had given its people little preparation in the operation of Western-type parliamentary institutions. A Legislative Council, which some other British African dependencies had been granted in the late nineteenth century,⁴ was not approved for Botswana until 1961, a year after the *annus mirabilis* of independence in Africa. Its Executive Council, similarly, was only established in 1961; the head of the colonial administration, known as the resident commissioner, having ruled by proclamation without being obliged to consult his heads of department as governors in most other African territories were. It had no coherent nationalist movement, and even its first president, Sir Seretse Khama, was a somewhat reluctant debutant as a

2. The only criticisms made of Botswana by Amnesty International have related to the return of some refugees to the then Rhodesia and South Africa. For instance, in 1973 Godfrey Beck, a South African, was repatriated against his will and sentenced to six months imprisonment.

3. See G. K. T. Chiepe, "Botswana's Development Strategy since Independence," in Michael Crowder, ed., *Education for Development in Botswana* (Gaborone, 1984), p. 53, for a summary of just how abysmal the state of the Botswana economy was on the eve of independence. See also Sir Seretse Khama, "Dissolution Speech" to the fourth meeting of the third session of the first National Assembly, Aug. 1969 (Government Printer, 1969).

4. In his campaign for the establishment of a Legislative Council for Botswana in the 1950s, Tshekedi Khama went to great lengths to list those British territories smaller in population than the Bechuanaland Protectorate that had been granted Legislative Councils as far back as the nineteenth century. He was particularly fond of quoting the example of the Gambia, whose Legislative Council was established in 1888. See Tshekedi Khama Papers at Pilikwe, file 92, the draft of his speech to the thirty-eighth session of the African Advisory Council in 1958. In his actual speech he cited other examples from Africa, including Sierra Leone, 1863, and Nyasaland, 1907.

politician and only assumed leadership of the party that was to take Botswana to independence—the Botswana Democratic Party—in 1962. Indeed, up to 1961 the only institutions in which Botswana could make their opinions formally known to their colonial masters at the national level were, as their names indicate, purely advisory ones that in no way bound the administration in the formulation and execution of its policy: the African and the European Advisory Councils, founded respectively in 1920 and 1921, and the Joint Advisory Council, established in 1951 and composed of an equal number of members from the other two councils.

For much of the 1950s the Bechuanaland Protectorate (more specifically, the Bamangwato Reserve, which comprised half the population of the country) had been in turmoil as a result of the decision of the British government to send Seretse Khama, the chief of the Bangwato, into exile because of his marriage to a white English woman. This turmoil provided the material for *The Tribe That Lost Its Head*, the novel by Nicholas Monsterrat, information officer for the British high commissioner to South Africa. The apartheid state was horrified at the prospect of a chief contracting a mixed marriage just across its border. Furthermore, Botswana's future as a separate entity had been in doubt right up to the time South Africa became a republic outside the Commonwealth in 1961. Hitherto incorporation of the three High Commission Territories of Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland had always been an eventuality provided for in the South Africa Act of 1909, which established the Union of South Africa in 1910. At least until the mid-fifties Botswana lived in fear that the British might accede to South African pressure to hand over these territories, which were seen as an integral part of the National Party's policy of apartheid.

Despite the apparently inauspicious circumstances under which Botswana gained its independence, there were a number of factors in its favor. The most important of these was, without doubt, the personality of the man who led Botswana during the first fourteen years of its independence. Jackson and Rosberg have described the majority of regimes of post-independence Africa as being characterized by the personal rule of an individual or series of individual leaders who have stamped their own idiosyncracies on the way their countries have been governed.⁵ Certainly the character of independent Botswana was shaped by the personality of Seretse Khama, especially in the 1970s. But unlike other African leaders he did not seek to manipulate the constitution to suit his own needs or that of his governing party. Rather, he seems to have taken pride in operating a constitution he had helped to design

5. Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant* (Berkeley, 1982). See also their "Personal Rule: Theory and Practice in Africa," in *Comparative Politics* (July 1984): 421–42.

during the pre-independence constitutional negotiations with the British. Personally he was equable, a good listener with a keen sense of humor. He was the most unpompous of men and disliked that trait in others. He was unostentatious—like most Batswana, whether chiefs or commoners—and was happiest when on his farm or at his cattle post. His own background was very different from that of any other African leader to whom power was transferred or yielded by the colonial rulers.⁶ He was by birth chief of the largest of the Tswana states that were incorporated by the British into their Bechuanaland Protectorate and, though he was never allowed by the British to take up his functions as head of the Bamangwato Tribal Administration, he was always recognized by his people as their chief, and no other member of the royal family was able or willing to usurp his position. Thus he had the security of traditional status in his society.⁷

As a chief he had inherited considerable personal wealth from his father, Sekgoma II, in the form of cattle,⁸ so that in seeking office at the national level acquisition of wealth was not a *prima facie* motive. But his particular form of wealth gave him some direct experience of the problems of rural development, if not a detailed understanding of economics. Unlike the majority of African traditional rulers, at the time of independence he was highly educated; he had a university degree from Fort Hare. He had also spent a year at Balliol College, Oxford, and had read for the Bar. He was thus a member of both the Western and traditional elites, enjoying high status in both. As a result he was in an unique position to deal with members of either elite, particularly when their interests conflicted and had to be reconciled. A spectacular example of this was when, as president, he was able, as a fellow chief, to persuade the other seven chiefs of the Tswana states within the borders of Botswana to transfer the territorial mineral rights of their tribes over to the national state, just as the Bangwato had done as a result of his indirect prompt-

6. The nearest parallels are President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, who held a minor traditional chieftaincy and was for a time a French-appointed cantonal chief but was educated as an assistant medical doctor, and the Sardauna of Sokoto, who attended the elite Katsina College but was a strong claimant to the Sultanate of Sokoto and held an important district headship before becoming premier of Northern Nigeria.

7. His security as a chief in traditional terms was almost absolute, since succession was by primogeniture and there was therefore no alternative to him. Thus although the British would not allow him to take up the chieftaincy, in the eyes of the people he continued to be their chief. Accordingly, when the British asked them to nominate an alternative, they refused to do so. Similarly, when in 1933 the British suspended his uncle, Tshekedi, who was regent for him during his minority, no replacement would come forward.

8. Normally he should have been heir to the herd built up by his grandfather, Khama III, but this was passed to Tshekedi as a consequence of the will Khama made in 1908 when he was estranged from his son and heir, Sekgoma II, the father of Seretse.

ing through their Native Authority. This was the more significant in that diamonds had just been found in Gammangwato at Orapa, so that the gesture of national integration on his part and that of his Bangwato subjects was not a hollow one.⁹

Seretse, however, never used his position as president of independent Botswana to renege on his formal renunciation of his own claim to the Ngwato chieftainship, which the British had made a condition of his return to Gammangwato in 1956, undoubtedly because he perceived that to do so would formally identify him with one section of the country in which he intended to be president of all the people.¹⁰ His own upbringing, further, was suited to the maintenance of constitutionalism. Apart from his own professional concern with the law, the role of the traditional chief in the *kgotla*¹¹ was very much that of a dispenser of justice and arbitrator of disputes in accordance with a set of precedents and accepted laws that were known to the people, who had the right to give their own opinions to their chief. Indeed, it is in the *kgotla* tradition that we may seek a fundamental reason for the survival of constitutionalism in Botswana outside the personality of Seretse himself.

The successful operation of a liberal democratic constitution where there is free debate has parallels in the institution of the *kgotla* where, at the level of the capital of the traditional state as well as in its wards and outlying villages, free adult males under the presidency of their chief and headmen debated political, administrative, and judicial matters.¹² While of course the word of the chief or headman carried great weight and was invariably final, it was so only if he listened to all points of view and either reflected the view of the majority or, when he had a personal interest in a decision going a particular

9. Mineral rights were vested in the chiefs and people of the eight Tswana states that were incorporated into the Bechuanaland Protectorate. No agreement could be made for the exploitation of minerals within their territories without the consent of the chief and people of the state, or tribe as it came to be known in colonial times. Seretse in his dual capacity as declared president of the Republic of Botswana and undeclared chief of the Bangwato persuaded his fellow chiefs in 1974 to cede these rights to the nation. He was in a particularly strong position to do this since the major mineral deposits so far found were both in his territory: copper at Selibe Phikwe and diamonds at Orapa.

10. This was a point made by Willie Henderson at the Botswana Conference at Birmingham and is confirmed by many conversations with family and friends of Seretse. He certainly opposed the reintroduction of *bogwera*, or traditional initiation ceremonies, involving circumcision of males, by the chief of the Bakgatla, Linchwe II, as divisive and emphasising "tribalism."

11. The *kgotla* was the forum where justice was dispensed, administrative decisions were made, and public meetings were held. It was presided over by the *kgosi* (chief) and was restricted to adult males.

12. Before the 1950s women attended *dikgotla* only as plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses. Male members of certain servile tribes, notably the Basarwa and the Bakgalagadi, were also excluded. See I. Schapera, *The Tswana*, new ed. (London, 1976), p. 37.

way, persuaded the majority that his decision was right. Since every free adult male had a right to be heard, a successful chief was one who was a good listener and managed to make decisions that reflected a consensus. It is in this sense that the Tswana say "a chief is a chief by the people."¹³

The *kgotla* was an institution shared by all eight Tswana states that were incorporated into what was the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Though Botswana is far from being an ethnically homogenous society, the bulk of its inhabitants lived under the rule of one of the Tswana states. Whatever their ethnic origin they thus shared a common political culture, and it is significant that, apart from the urban centers and the special case of the Bangwaketse discussed below, the main opposition to the ruling Botswana Democratic party, representing an alliance of aristocrats and their former subjects, came from the minorities living outside the traditional states or from those who were not successfully incorporated into them. Notable examples were the Kalanga of the northeast, who once had their own state, and the Bayei of the Tawana state, who far from being incorporated into it were treated as serfs.¹⁴ That minorities do have a role in the modern state as they did in the traditional state was clearly demonstrated at the 1984 election, when the two largest pluralities in the country were gained in the Bangwato capital of Serowe by a white Mongwato¹⁵ and a Serowe woman of Kalanga origin.¹⁶

Another tradition that has undoubtedly influenced attitudes of Batswana to political succession in the modern state is their concern with legitimacy as the basis of succession in the traditional state. In the Tswana states, succession not only to kingship but also to the headship of the family was by male primogeniture.¹⁷ Thus the king's heir was always known:¹⁸ a chief was born, not

13. It does not imply that a chief's legitimacy is a negotiable factor but rather that a ruler could misgovern to such an extent that his people would drive him into exile, kill him, or vote with their feet by removing themselves from his jurisdiction.

14. K. Kebeditswe, "Subordination and Conflict in Ngamiland: The Bayei Protest of 1948," University of Botswana history research essay, 1984.

15. Colin Blackbeard is a third-generation member of this well-established family of Serowe whites who settled there originally as traders. He is currently minister of works in the government of Dr. Quett Masire (Apr. 1986).

16. Ma Chiepe, as she is popularly known, is a member of an important Serowe Kalanga family and is currently minister of external affairs in the Masire government (Apr. 1987).

17. Jon Comaroff, "Rules and Rulers: Political Processes in a Tswana Chieftaindom," *Man*, n. s., 13 (1978): 1-20, has argued on the basis of a study of the 1896-1919 period of the chieftaincy of one Tswana state, that of the South African-based Barolong boo Tshidi, that ascriptive rules rarely determine the devolution of authority. A study of succession in the Tswana states that comprise modern Botswana suggests, however, that if not exactly an iron law, succession by primogeniture was an overarching one, and when the British administration imposed chiefs contrary to this law they were not recognized by the people, who continued to give allegiance to the deposed and rightful chief. The only way to circumvent the law of male primogeniture was by assassinating the

appointed or elected. We may speculate, therefore, that the unchallenged transition of the presidency from Sir Seretse Khama to Dr. Quett Masire was in part due to the traditional acceptance of strict laws of succession, in this case not male primogeniture but the constitutional prescription that on the death of the president during his term of office he is automatically succeeded by his vice president.

Such a perception would come naturally to what is to this day a basically rural population still inclined to support the traditional ruling elite, much of whose membership has entered the modern sector. Thus the success of the "radical" opposition Botswana National Front in Ngwaketse rural constituencies was due not to any maverick concern of one group of Tswana peasants with Marxist ideology but rather to the fact that the chief of the Bangwaketse, Bathoen II, decided in 1969 to abdicate in favor of his son in order to be able to contest the seat then held by Quett Masire. His basic support, and that of the candidates he sponsored in other Ngwaketse constituencies, was very much that of his counterparts in other rural constituencies and would no doubt go to the BDP were he to have been standing for that party. Thus the majority of rural voters continued to give their allegiance to the traditional ruling elite. By contrast, opposition to the BDP was fissiparous and made little headway until the 1984 election when the BNF made impressive inroads into the urban vote. Ill organized, unwilling to cooperate with each other, and largely regional in their appeal and without clearly defined philosophies, they presented no real threat to the ruling party, which thus had little incentive to pursue extra-constitutional means to buttress its support.

Perhaps the most important factor in Botswana's favor was that at independence it had a relatively small population—some half a million spread over 582,000 square kilometers—largely sharing a common political culture and for the most part speaking a common language, Setswana. Traditional power was not concentrated or, indeed, coterminous with the modern state as it was in the other two High Commission Territories of Swaziland and Lesotho,

incumbent or driving him into exile and thus opening up the succession to the next in line. This question is discussed by Michael Crowder, Jack Parson, and Neil Parsons in "Legitimacy, Faction and Personal Rule in Botswana Political History," in Jack Parson, ed., *Succession to High Office in Botswana* (Athens, Ohio, forthcoming).

18. In the 1930s when the British tried to formalize procedures for appointing and recognizing chiefs, they met with opposition from both chiefs and people, who protested, in the words of Phethu Mphoeng, royal Mongwato headman, that "according to our custom our Chiefs are born not appointed, on this account some of us will never agree to this law." Botswana National Archives, Bamangwato Tribal Administration, C/3/627, "Notes of Kgotla at Serowe of 19 April 1933 to discuss Proclamations (Drafts)." Thus, since the king's heir was always knowable, opponents of the new proclamations argued that the administration could not give or withhold its recognitions, because there was effectively no alternative candidate.

which had similarly small populations. Rather, it was dispersed among eight pre-colonial states. And while one of them—that of the Bangwato—was in terms of population almost as large as the others put together, the focus of its traditional authority, Seretse Khama, had never taken up office and had identified himself with the modern state rather than the traditional.

Even so the prospects for Botswana's survival as a truly independent nation looked bleak. Other African nations were so suspicious of the true character of its independence and so convinced that it was little more than a Bantustan in disguise that they ostracized its independence celebrations, which were attended only by Britain, the United States, and Taiwan. The Organization of African Unity was not initially keen to admit Botswana as a member. Botswana depended on Britain to subsidize its budget and help with the construction of a new capital within its own borders at Gaborone to replace the colonial capital at Mafeking, which was within South Africa's borders. Its infrastructure, little developed by the British, was rudimentary: there were almost no tarred roads, few schools, and meager medical facilities. What is more, it was completely surrounded by white-dominated South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, with the exception of a single point of common frontier with Zambia at Kazungula. It was almost entirely dependent economically on South Africa, with which it was still joined in a customs union, for all its imports and for an exit route for its few exports, consisting principally of beef products. Its alternative economic and communications links had already been compromised in 1965 with Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence for what he called Rhodesia. Much of its foreign revenue came from the earnings of migrant laborers on the farms and in the mines of South Africa.¹⁹ Seretse Khama, well aware of the sort of pressure South Africa could put on his country as a result of his own experiences over his marriage, had to tread a delicate path. He had no army and only a small police force, and yet his sympathies were with those who wanted to replace the apartheid regime of South Africa and those Africans who were beginning to fight the Smith regime in Southern Rhodesia on his northeast border. The way he trod this path has been termed one of passive neutrality,²⁰ and it was certainly the only one possible given his weak position immediately after independence. But gradually it won him friends among, and recognition by, other African leaders, most notably Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. Through him Botswana gained admission to the OAU.

The most positive development since independence was the mineral revo-

19. See Jack Parson, "The Labour Reserve in Historical Perspective: Towards a Political Economy of the Bechuanaland Protectorate," in Louis A. Picard, ed., *The Evolution of Modern Botswana* (London, 1985), pp. 40–57.

20. This point was made at the Botswana Conference at the University of Birmingham organized by Willie Henderson.

lution involving, first, the opening up of the copper mine at Selebi-Phikwe and, second, the discovery of a huge pipe of diamonds at Orapa in the Central District, as the Bamangwato Reserve was now renamed. This development was not only to influence the course of liberal democracy in the country but also to permit the Botswana government a more flexible foreign policy. The infrastructure of the copper mine, which included road, rail, and water development, and the revenue from diamonds and copper nickel—disappointing in the latter case because of the fall in the world prices for that mineral—permitted a level of development and recurrent expenditure that had been unimaginable at independence. From being one of the poorest countries in Africa it now became one of the wealthiest, with a per capita GNP of over \$900 per annum by 1980.²¹ The revenues from minerals, bolstered by favorable contracts for the export of beef to the European Common Market, permitted the Botswana government to improve the country's communications system, to provide rural areas with water, and to lay the foundations of a universal primary-education system. Seretse kept a lid on extravagant expenditure on prestige projects that have characterized other African countries which have been the beneficiaries of mineral and oil wealth, the most notorious example being Nigeria. Rather, he was able to maintain support for his party because of his ability to provide funds for development at the grassroots level. Indeed, up until his death the economy was continuously expanding, so that government was effectively able to purchase its way out of trouble.

Furthermore, the secure economic base enabled Seretse to be more active in southern-African politics, though given Botswana's own precarious position on the frontline, he had to maintain strict neutrality in the developing armed conflict both to the north and the south of him. But his neutrality became a positive one in which he made clear his moral support for the freedom fighters in Zimbabwe and his abhorrence for the racist policies of the South African government. Of particular significance was the opening of the Botzam road to the Black North crossing the Zambezi at Kazungula, which linked Botswana with Zambia and was financed by the latter's newfound mineral wealth. Symbolic it may have been, but before Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 it did provide the one land link with black-ruled Africa.

By the time of his death, when the Smith regime had just collapsed and further routes to the north had been opened up, and thereby potentially lessening Botswana's almost complete dependence on South Africa for imports, Seretse had done a remarkable job in maintaining an open liberal democracy. His decision to set up an army in 1977—in the form of the Botswana Defense Force—was necessitated not by any internal dissent but by the hot pursuit by Smith's troops of Zimbabwean freedom fighters across

21. *World Bank Annual Report*, 1982, p. 63.

the Botswana border. Yet many believed that the stability Seretse had given Botswana was a stability very much of his own making that could not survive his own death.²² They speculated that the transition of power from Seretse to his vice president, Quett Masire, under the provisions of the constitution might be placed under strain as a Mongwaketse from the south replaced a Mongwato from the north. Indeed, Colin Legum misread the situation when he described Masire as a stopgap president who only held office because he was Seretse's friend.²³

While Masire may have lacked the dynamic personality and popularity of Seretse as well as his traditional status, he was far from being his creature.²⁴ He was the principal organizer behind the success of the BDP in the 1960s. He headed the all-important Ministry of Finance and Development Planning from its inception. He proved his political skills in 1984 when he acquired electoral legitimacy with 70 percent of the vote in a free and fair election in which a remarkably high proportion of the electorate—78 percent—voted.²⁵ What is more remarkable about Masire's victory is that it was achieved after three years of drought and a recession.

The triumph of Masire at the polls saw an end to Bangwato domination of national politics; Masire had shrewdly named Seretse's cousin and political comrade to succeed him as vice president, but when Lenyeletse Seretse died in 1983 Masire felt confident enough to name Peter Mmusi, a Mokwena, as his new deputy. After the election, when accusations were made that the poll in Gaborone South had not been fairly conducted, and these accusations were sustained by the Supreme Court on the discovery of an unopened ballot box, President Masire personally declared that it was "a black day for democracy in Botswana,"²⁶ even though the accusations touched his own vice president. As it happened, Mmusi had defeated Kenneth Koma, the leader of the largest of the opposition parties, the BNF. In the subsequent re-election, Koma won by eight hundred votes, proving that democracy was still alive under the country's second president. Fortunately for Masire, however, the constitution handed over by the British provided for the appointment of four specially elected members by the majority party. By the convenient resignation of one

22. This was still a view held by some as late as 1982.

23. Cited in Peter Shephard, "A Watershed Election for Botswana? I: The Winners," unpublished typescript, pp. 6–7.

24. This view that Masire "has never really emerged from Sir Seretse's shadow" still persists, however; see *Africa Confidential* (1985).

25. See the papers of the University of Botswana General Election Study Workshop held in Gaborone in 1985 presented by some of the foremost political scientists specializing in Botswana's recent political history. The overall conclusion of these papers was that the election had been free and fair.

26. Botswana *Daily News*, 23 Oct. 1984.

of them, the vice president was able to take his seat in the house again at the same time as his victorious opponent.

The foregoing picture of Botswana may seem too rosy for credibility, especially in the context of the vicissitudes that have accompanied independence for the generality of African countries. Botswana was of course not entirely free from the stresses experienced by other African countries, nor was its practice of democracy entirely above reproach. There is no doubt that in the rural areas the common people inevitably equated the BDP with the government, which was of course represented by the local administration, and thus the ruling party effectively had an advantage over its opponents, but not such an advantage that it could overcome them in rural Ngwaketse or the northeast and northwest. When the opposition Botswana Peoples party won the 1969 local government elections in Francistown and the North West District, the government prevented them from taking control of the councils, which increased the number of its nominated members on the councils. Seretse was accused of over-reacting in his handling of the student protests at the jailing of members of the Botswana Defense Force in 1977 for killing three white "tourists" in the Zimbabwe border war zone. Since one of them was a Briton, the British press joined the South African press in its outcry against Botswana. Certainly the incident revealed that Botswana had the potential for repression in a crisis situation. Botswana's trade-union legislation is one of the more restrictive in Africa, permitting workers few rights.²⁷

Of much graver concern is the way a small and increasingly urban-based elite has amassed wealth in the form of cattle and to a lesser extent land, with the result that there is a concentration of the ownership in the hands of a minority of households. The consequent dispossession of ordinary farmers has forced them to seek wage-earning employment as herdsmen and farm laborers for the elite or to travel to the towns or abroad in search of work. While they still maintain their rural roots and some land, they constitute what Jack Parson has dubbed a "peasantariat"²⁸ and are prime candidates for alienation from the ruling party, which they at present support. While this did not in fact take place on any dramatic scale at the last election,²⁹ it is an eventuality that has been the cause for much concern in the ruling party since.

This alienation was most pronounced among those who had settled in the towns. The government has been unable to satisfy the aspirations of the voter

27. Dave Cooper, "Unions in Botswana: Comparisons with Lesotho," *South African Labour Bulletin* 10, 8 (July-Aug. 1985): 108-10, in particular.

28. Jack Parson, "The Political Economy of Botswana: A Case in the Study of Politics and Social Change in Post-Colonial Societies," unpublished D.Phil thesis, University of Sussex, 1979.

29. See Jack Parson, "The 1984 Botswana General Elections and Results: A Macro Analysis," paper presented at the University of Botswana General Election Study Workshop, 1984.

in the rapidly expanding urban agglomerations. Gaborone, for example, had an estimated population of 96,000 in 1985, compared with the predicted 20,000 by 1990 for which the city was planned in 1963. The consequence has been an increase in unemployment in the capital and other major modern urban centers with the ominous development of shantytowns in the second city of Francistown. The problem for the government was that to devote further funds to the towns would risk potential alienation of still loyal rural voters who complained that the bulk of development resources were devoted to the towns. Meanwhile the disaffected in the towns lent an ever more eager ear to the populist Marxist rhetoric of one section of the BNF opposition. This became very clear in the results of the last election (1984) in which the two parliamentary seats of the capital city as well as control of its town council went to the opposition BNF. Similarly, control of Francistown went yet again to the Botswana People's party, while in overall vote the BDP became effectively the urban opposition party.³⁰ Even so, the opposition parties had only seven seats out of thirty-five in the National Assembly. Whether the BDP would look on so benignly if the opposition parties began to show signs of making real inroads into its majority remains to be seen.

Of these developments the one that gives gravest cause for concern is the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, the bulk of whom were identified with the ruling BDP, which like the other parties gave little room for participation in its governance by its ordinary supporter. Associated with this development were rumors of corruption in high places, a problem from which Botswana had been almost eccentrically free (given its prevalence in most other African countries). But fortunately instances of suspected corruption and abuse of office were freely discussed in the press, and one junior minister had to resign in 1985 because of allegations about his abuse of office.³¹

The above reservations notwithstanding, in the aftermath of the 1984 general election Botswana still appeared to be a stable polity with a firm commitment to upholding the liberal democratic institutions transferred to it by Britain. The unknown factor was South Africa.

When in 1885 the Tswana rulers agreed to British protection, they did so in

30. Ibid.

31. The junior minister in question was David Magang. See *Daily News*, 7 Jan. 1986, where he stated that he "decided to resign my Cabinet post in order to afford the government the opportunity of supporting those industries with which I am directly associated by making policy changes or implementing existing policies without exposing government to the potential public criticism of 'ASSISTING A COLLEAGUE IN CABINET.'" On 9 Jan. the *Daily Gazette* reported Magang as saying that all he had done was "merely to resign my post as a member of the cabinet in order that I could be more able to deal with my personal business operations." The *Gazette* also reported that "Mr. Magang saw his involvement in Phalakeane (Projects) as being no different from the activities of other Members of Parliament who were involved in the cattle industry."

part to save themselves from the expansionist Boers. Thereafter their territory was the jumping-off point for the Jameson Raid of 1895, and British troops used their new Protectorate as a base during the South African War of 1899–1902. During that war Linchwe I of the Bakgatla-baga-Kgafela took up arms on the British side against the Boers of the South African Republic in the hopes of regaining land and cattle the latter had wrested from his people.³² But the long-term threat to the Batswana originated in the South Africa Act of 1909 that set up the Union of South Africa. This made specific provision for the eventual incorporation of the three High Commission Territories into the Union, provided the latter's government complied with certain criteria concerning the administration of its "native" inhabitants. Thus, from the establishment of the Union in 1910 up until the late 1950s when Britain finally set the Bechuanaland Protectorate on the constitutional path followed by her other African colonies, the main energies of the traditional and Western-educated elites—and they were often the same—were devoted to staving off the possibility of incorporation into South Africa. The absence of a nationalist movement in the Bechuanaland Protectorate in any way comparable with that of other African territories until the early fifties is explained by the fact that for the Batswana their main preoccupation was not getting rid of the existing colonial power but avoiding transfer to another with whose racist philosophies and harsh treatment of its black population they were all too familiar. The early stirrings of nationalism in the Protectorate were significantly in the Bamangwato Reserve and were restricted to the issue of the return of Seretse, whose exile had in any case been the result of British capitulation to South African pressure.³³

When Botswana became independent in 1966, then, it had had a long experience of the sort of threat South Africa represented. Even the threat of economic reprisals was not a new one, for these had been intermittently imposed by South African governments since the 1920s in the form of weight restrictions on cattle imports which effectively excluded African-owned cattle. Many Batswana had relatives across the frontier or had traveled to the Union for work or to further their education. They had few illusions as to the nature of the government that had once wanted to take them over and with which they now had to deal without any assistance from British protection.

32. See R. F. Morton, "Linchwe I and the Kgatla Campaign in the South African War, 1899–1902," *Journal of African History* 26, 2–3 (1985): 169–91.

33. See Neil Parsons, "Seretse Khama and the Bangwato Succession Crisis, 1948–1953," in Jack Parson, ed., *Succession to High Office in Botswana*, and Michael Crowder, "Professor Macmillan Goes on Safari: The British Government Observer Team and the Crisis over the Seretse Khama Marriage," in Hugh Macmillan and Shula Marks, eds., *Africa and Empire: W. M. Macmillan, Historian and Social Critic* (London, forthcoming).

Indeed, the only categorical difference in relations with South Africa was that these could no longer be mediated by the British, and simultaneously Botswana could not, if it were to retain credibility with other African states, establish formal diplomatic relations with Pretoria. Yet she could not avoid official contact of some sort, being virtually surrounded by South African territory since, as a result of Ian Smith's declaration of illegal independence for Rhodesia from Britain in 1966, that country had become a sort of South African dependency. For Botswana there was no alternative route for her exports and imports other than that through South Africa. A member of the South African Customs Union because her goods had to pass through South African ports, Botswana's river-water supplies could be interfered with by the South Africans; its currency until 1976 had been that of South Africa; and before the mineral revolution of the 1970s one of its principal sources of foreign exchange had been the earnings of migrant laborers in the mines and on the farms of South Africa. Although the situation was somewhat eased by the income from mineral exports in the 1970s and the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, Botswana still remained deeply dependent economically on South Africa.

In these circumstances Botswana had to tread a delicate path—particularly regarding the influx of refugees from the oppression of the apartheid policies of South Africa.³⁴ With no defense force before 1977 and a long and porous border, Botswana's territory might be made the base for incursions into South Africa by opponents of the apartheid regime. Significantly, Botswana's relationship with South Africa entered a categorically new phase in June 1985. On the pretext that Botswana was harboring those active in the African National Congress's growing guerrilla war against the Pretoria regime, the South African Defense Force staged a raid on Gaborone that killed twelve people, mostly South African refugees with a marginal relationship with the ANC or none at all.

The raid did not altogether come as a surprise, since South Africa had issued warnings both indirect and direct to Botswana that reprisals would be taken if there were any suspicion that ANC guerrillas were operating from her territory. In response to direct warnings a number of ANC supporters had already been requested by the Botswana government to leave the country. Indirect warnings took the form of raids on Lesotho and Mozambique. But somehow it never seemed possible that South Africa would actually invade a country like Botswana with a wide circle of friends in the international community. The

34. James M. Polhemus, "The Refugee Factor in Botswana," *Immigrants and Minorities*, 4, 1 (Mar. 1985): 28–44. See also his "Botswana's Role in the Liberation of Southern Africa," in Picard, ed., *The Evolution of Modern Botswana*, pp. 228–70.

success of Botswana's independence and the maintenance of a stable democratic government in the face of all the pressures experienced from South Africa and the Smith regime had earned international admiration. The raid underlined the vulnerability of Botswana to South African force. What South Africa hoped to gain from the raid was less apparent. Neil Parsons has speculated that the raid was launched to satisfy the white South African electorate that something was being done against a country that seemed to be a base for incursions by the ANC and furthermore was an irritant to South Africa in that it did not conform to the image Pretoria had painted of Africans as blacks unable to rule themselves. Botswana demonstrated that in Africa it is possible to maintain a functioning and prosperous nonracial democracy under the rule of law—the very future that white extremists feared.³⁵

Whatever South Africa's real motives, the immediate question arising from the raid was how far South Africa's overt and likely to be repeated intervention in Botswana would jeopardize its stability. The South African regime had already amply demonstrated its skills at destabilizing neighboring states, usually based on ideological and ethnic divisions within those states. In Botswana the ground was less fertile for such South African machinations. Nevertheless, the main area of discontent—the urban poor—seemed particularly vulnerable to potential developments in the region resulting from any sanctions imposed on South Africa. The sudden return, for example, of twenty thousand erstwhile migrant workers could only increase urban discontent.

Most nations—democratic or otherwise—faced with a crisis such as that which confronted Botswana in the aftermath of the June 1985 raid, declare a state of national emergency and resort to defensive measures in the name of national security that effectively restrict the liberties of their citizens. The South African raid and the threat of further such reprisals did not provoke the Botswana government into such a reaction. Indeed, it even tolerated embarrassing questions and criticisms relating to the apparent failure of the Botswana Defense Force to take any action against the invaders in the short time they were in the country. The internal political opposition significantly did not seek to make political capital from what had been a humiliating experience. In the face of continuing provocation and incursions by the South Africans, however, the Botswana government began to employ the Botswana Defense Force in the unaccustomed role of stopping and searching civilian vehicles for arms and to pass an act giving itself wide powers to detain persons suspected of threatening state security.

Nevertheless, Botswana continued to remain an example of a functioning

35. Personal communications from Neil Parsons, 14–15 June 1985.

liberal democracy embarrassingly close to a country that indulged in some of the most ugly forms of state repression in the name of preserving the very values of Western civilization that gave birth to the concept of liberal democracy. How long, in the face of the ongoing crisis in South Africa, Botswana could itself survive as the only true practitioner of those values in the region remains a moot point.

20. *South Africa and the Transfers of Power in Africa*

S A M C. N O L U T S H U N G U

Considered at any point during the process of the transfer of power in Africa, South Africa looked different, a case apart. Self-governing since Union, with a relatively large white population, rapidly industrializing, and possessing a relatively large military capability, it was a power in its own right.

Yet, although South Africa does indeed differ from all other countries in Africa, neither the colonialism that these territories endured nor the eventual transfer of power was, in any sense, external to South African development. South Africa, in its present form, was largely shaped by the same forces that created colonial and post-colonial Africa. Three hundred years of white settlement may obscure the fact, but white rule over much of what is now the Republic of South Africa barely predates the "Scramble," while the foundation of a single state and national economy belongs to the same period as the creation of the Belgian Congo.

THE COLONIAL SITUATION

Without the imperial expansion of the late nineteenth century, there might never have been a unification of South Africa. With this intensification of imperialist activity South Africa's global strategic and economic significance was enhanced and even transformed. New class relationships emerged through the introduction of European capital, and later, through the Union constitution of 1910, the basis was laid in for a form of political development that would be more consistently racist in accordance with the needs of intensified exploitation and subjugation.

The dispossession of Africans of their land and their enforced conversion

into wage laborers might be features of the development of capitalism, but the denial to blacks of citizenship rights and the elaborate structures of labor coercion and regimentation corresponded more to the experience of colonial societies than to the emergence of capitalism in other societies which became, by that very process, more inclusive national states and societies. The supporting racist ideology also was distinctly colonial, reflecting almost exactly the hierarchies of disdain that prevailed throughout the colonial world.

Politics in South Africa centred for decades after Union on issues that were essentially colonial even in the way they were thought about and discussed: the racial structuring of public life and policy toward Africans referred to for a long time as the "Native Problem"; relations between Afrikaners and whites of British descent who were highly conscious of their imperial heritage; and questions relating to South Africa's position in the empire and the Commonwealth.

Apartheid, apparently so odd in the universe of evolutionary tolerance that seemed to characterize the post-Second World War British Empire, nevertheless owed much of its solutions to the Native Problem to colonial concepts of Native Institutions and Indirect Rule; indeed, the pass laws and the racial hierarchies were the stuff of colonialism. Apartheid, extending these notions beyond the comparative flexibility and empiricism of imperial practice, just as they were becoming discredited elsewhere, was, to be sure, a creation of a section of the Afrikaner intelligentsia. Yet, they did not invent racial segregation or the super-exploitation of regimented labor. What they did do, with the aid of a one-sided invocation of an Afrikaner ethnic consciousness and with much borrowing from fascism, was to utilize existing structures in the service of their own particular aims.

At the cultural and ideological level, apartheid invoked a deeply colonial utopia: the dream of a white republic where blacks would exist only to minister to the white man's needs and otherwise discreetly and unobtrusively keep to their own place, and places, in an unalterable state of tribal innocence. Colonial was also its heroic ideal—of the whites vigilantly defending Western Christian civilization from the onslaughts or, even, mere contagion of the surrounding barbarism.

If President P. W. Botha's National party can no longer dream such dreams aloud or finds that they now trouble its waking hours, the colonial culture still persists quite strongly: in the unrelenting racialism of its vision of the country and of its possibilities; in the *jusqu'au-boutisme* of the Afrikaner following that constrains the leadership's search for more probable means of conserving white power and privilege; and in the cataclysmic sense of history that the government has purveyed for nearly four decades. The mind of settler coloni-

al man which the Nationalists made their own remains largely what it has always been—from Algeria to Angola, from Kenya to Zimbabwe—unable to think of the end except in terms of racial apocalypse.

Yet politically, and in terms of its economic development, South Africa is no colony. It is a post-colonial state that made its transition in a distinctive way, carrying many of the key features of colonialism into the post-colonial era.

South Africa had no independence year, though the enactment of the South Africa Act by the British Parliament effectively gave it full self-government. But for five decades after that the extent of its sovereignty would be debated—the most famous occasion being at the outbreak of the Second World War, when the government of the day argued that South Africa could not legally stay out of the war once Britain was committed, a view quite correctly disputed by Afrikaner nationalists. The slow completion of the severance of constitutional ties with Britain was tied up with the more substantive, equally gradual process, of the political ascendancy of Afrikaner nationalism. It is the triumph of the National party in 1948 that may be compared to the transfer of governmental power elsewhere to an indigenous group seeking to separate their country from the empire. Such a comparison would still be misleading, since the 1948 government was not the first nationalist one, nor was there much left to sever constitutionally—Afrikaner nationalists had to exaggerate the real significance of the ties that remained in order to give meaning to the “nationalist” struggle in terms of which they sought to mobilize diverse Afrikaner interests. In the end even the Afrikaner republic that was sought had become more symbolic than substantive. It was the politics and the political culture that took on a distinct character, representing indeed a parting of the ways, in this regard at any rate, with the empire and with colonial Africa in the era of decolonisation.¹

Yet Afrikaner nationalism brought no radical break with the past, either economically or in regard to international relations. Its main innovation was apartheid, whose principal historical mission was not to force a rupture with the past but to smooth the transition to a changed political economy for all categories of whites, subject, to be sure, to Afrikaner political supremacy.

Economically it was a means of facilitating the development of an Afrikaner bourgeoisie that would also bring material improvement to all other classes of Afrikaners.² But it was much more than this. It facilitated the transition from an economy based on mining and agriculture, heavily dependent on a colonial

1. Leonard M. Thompson, “The Parting of the Ways in South Africa,” in Prosser Gifford and Win. Roger Louis, eds., *The Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940–1960* (New Haven and London, 1982).

2. See D. O’Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934–1948* (Cambridge, England, 1983).

labor regime, to one increasingly reliant on manufacturing that could, in theory at least, do without the full panoply of labor repression.³ Apartheid arbitrated between the competing demands of industrial employers of the new type and the older sectors for cheap black labor,⁴ prevented any gain in industrial and political power that the changing economic structure might bring, and guaranteed thereby the suppression of black wages globally in order to sustain across the whole economy high wages for whites.⁵ It was able to create increased employment opportunity for Afrikaners in an expanding state sector, and through state expansion to sustain a high level of expenditure that had the desired Keynesian effects on economic growth. Black economic suppression kept sufficiently at bay the inflationary pressures that would otherwise have ensued.

In short, Afrikaner nationalism secured the incorporation of Afrikaners into metropolitan capital, which they had previously denounced as imperialist, and reconciled them to it, and was thus able to guarantee political and industrial tranquillity in a time of transformation, at the expense, needless to say, of blacks, most particularly the black working class. The racialist strategy for development incorporated the repressive elements of colonial production into the post-colonial political economy, while at the political and cultural level it perpetuated colonialism.

Yet, the features of post-colonialism were there: state expansion; the growth of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie; military expansion; and domestic insecurity. At the economic level, there was uneven, polarized development and persistent disadvantageous specialization in external trade and technological dependency. In addition, the former imperialists continued to dominate South African investment and external trade. In these ways Afrikaner nationalism was an episode in the renewal of imperialism in a post-colonial context. It sustained significant aspects of colonial economy and, through a racialist immigration policy (which became even more important in the 1960s in the face of black resistance and the growing shortages of

3. S. Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development: Comparative Perspectives* (New Haven and London, 1980). See also R. H. Davies, *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1979).

4. See H. Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid," in *Economy and Society* 1, 4 (1972); S. Trapido, "South Africa in a Comparative Study of Industrialisation," in *Journal of Development Studies* 7, 3 (1971).

5. Some accounts of repression and workers' struggles are provided by: D. du Toit, *Capital and Labour in South Africa: Class Struggles in the 1970s* (London, 1981), pt. I; R. Luckhardt and B. Wall, *Organise . . . or Starve!: The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions* (London, 1980); P. Bonner, "Black Trade Unions in South Africa Since World War II," in R. M. Price and C. G. Rosberg, *The Apartheid Regime: Political Power and Racial Domination* (Berkeley, 1978).

skilled manpower occasioned by job reservation and the bureaucratic regimentation of the movement of black labor) it sought new colonists from Europe and the dissolving colonial empires. The Afrikaner bourgeoisie benefited from Afrikaner nationalism, yet it was not for all that a nationalist bourgeoisie; it should be borne in mind that the nationalism itself had essentially petty-bourgeois origins.

There had been no rupture, and such "decolonization" as had occurred had sought to conserve as much as possible of the colonial settler utopia to secure a privileged place for Afrikaners in international capitalism, which benefited since it was no stranger to colonialism or racialism. Until recently, in fact, it was content to pay its dues, *les deniers du rêve*, in terms of economies and opportunities foregone on account of a restrictive racialist labor policy.

South Africa's view of itself is different. It has always been. During the early years of decolonization it already saw itself as a power in Africa, alongside the colonizers: a white state determining its own future internally and even planning to "decolonize" its own native territories—the Bantustans—eventually. Beyond indicating its own subimperialist ambitions in the continent, such a self-image had obvious propaganda value: it convinced many that South Africa was well outside the vast historical developments unfolding in Africa and the rest of the colonial world. It obscured the equally important fact that if, in Smuts's phrase in another context, white South Africa "came out of the storm unscathed," there, indeed, would be the true measure of the limitations of the process of decolonization that would then have changed everything but that which most needed to be changed.⁶

Academic study of South Africa has by and large understated the colonial aspect as it has also, until recently, tended to ignore the African context. By viewing apartheid as an "internal colonialism" some have, to be sure, brought back into view the colonial situation, yet the notion of internal colonialism overstates the importance of the Bantustans and banishes peremptorily from white society the colonist in favor of the colonizer, which in my view is somewhat premature.⁷ Other writers stress the uniqueness of Afrikanerdom, or of its system of domination, or, indeed, the rationality and resilience of white power.⁸ This stress is relieved only by occasional comparative analyses

6. Smuts was referring to the storm of opposition in the United Nations. South African Parliament, *General Assembly Debates* (1946), vol. 59, col. 10918.

7. See also No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation: The National Question in South Africa* (London, 1979), pp. 105–31.

8. Cf. Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development*; H. Simpson, *The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and Its Apartheid Policy* (Stockholm, 1980). See, however, B. Magubane, *The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa* (New York, 1979). Of related interest, A. Emmanuel, "White Settler Colonialism and the Myth of Investment Imperialism," *New Left Review* 73 (1972).

that by-pass the colonial experience in both its domestic and international dimensions.⁹

Seeing South Africa in the perspective of colonialism and of the process of its ending does, however, have considerable justification, culturally and historically. It has merit in highlighting the continuity in the complex Western presence in Africa that the transfers of power so far have modified but hardly transformed and to which racist South Africa is integrally linked. For the combination of race and class oppression in South Africa is a distinctively colonial development that is sustained not by the eccentricities or even the power of local whites but by a global structure of domination and exploitation within which Africans are reserved the lowliest place. To alter that reality was the promise of the transfers of power in the rest of Africa, which is why the whole process was viewed in white South Africa with considerable anxiety at every stage.

SURVIVING DECOLONIZATION

Both in prospect and in execution the decolonization of Africa had a profound impact on South Africans. Those in power saw in it a mortal threat to their race privilege and power, while the others found in it proof positive that their struggle against the oppressor was within sight of victory. Coping with the external and domestic consequences, both real and imagined, of the transfer of power in the rest of Africa would become one of the central preoccupations of the white regime, one that in various ways conditioned the management of the problems that arose from South Africa's own distinctive history.

From its very early days the decolonization movement caused concern to South African rulers for two main reasons. The creation of armed independent black states raised the danger of aggression and subversion from an Africa thought unlikely to accept the continuance of the white racist state. The weakening of Western power over the continent brought the specter of a Communist advance, more or less allied to all of white South Africa's natural enemies, including colonial Indians and the Indian government, which had raised the issue of racial discrimination at the very first session of the United Nations General Assembly. Less urgent but by no means unimportant was South Africa's ambition to treat African markets as its privileged hinterland and a major support for its continuing industrial development. For most of the period up to the imposition of the African trade boycotts in the early 1960s these considerations were largely for the future, the present anxieties centering more on the security of the apartheid state. Later, economic concerns

9. This dimension has been particularly evident in blacks' struggles in South Africa. See G. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology* (Berkeley, 1978).

would play a more specific and more important part but would always remain subordinate to security needs. Just as the commitment to the defence of white domination restricts the range of options for internal economic development, so also does the need to defend that order militarily against external dangers place definite limits on the extent to which South Africa's industrial capitalism can discover and exploit opportunity in Africa.¹⁰

The economic aspect perhaps more than any other highlights a certain ambiguity in the situation of South Africa in Africa. For, while Pretoria has undoubtedly felt threatened in Africa, it has also sensed opportunities for economic expansion into that hinterland. Within its own borders also the political and ideological measures it has adopted to secure itself have created conditions that, for most of this period, have been favorable to the growth of white power and prosperity. The other side of the coin of danger is opportunity, though the way each opportunity is seized or lost may augment the danger or bring new perils.

There was always sufficient ambiguity in the process of decolonization for South Africa to hope to profit by it. In the post-Second World War period it could devise schemes of cooperation with the imperial powers for the management of the affairs of the continent and for its "defense." Though little came of these plans in the end, the effort showed an underlying sympathy between the white South African leadership and the Western leaders—a mutual attraction based on shared economic interests and racial sentiments. Even when decolonization did occur, in spite of South Africa's wishes, there were many in the ruling classes of the decolonizing powers who regretted it and remained more strongly attracted to South Africa than to its numerous detractors. Right until the independence of Zimbabwe, British leaders entertained and purveyed the idea that South Africa had a crucial and constructive role to play not only in the defense of Western interests but in the oeuvre of decolonization itself.

Throughout the 1960s and the 1970s South Africa could continue to rely on the former imperial powers and the still remaining colonial regimes, as well as on the continued dependence and often attraction of independent Africa toward the West, to exercise a moderating influence on African states regarding itself, to keep out that most feared, most remarked upon Communist danger from Africa, and, here and there, to open doors for South African trade and influence in a hostile continent.

For white South Africa, the transfer of power in the rest of Africa (north of the Zambezi, at any rate), was not ideologically unassimilable either. In practice it meant that for the most part each new state made its separate peace with

10. S. C. Nolutshungu, *South Africa in Africa: A Study in Ideology and Foreign Policy* (Manchester, 1975).

imperialism, a process that the ideologists of apartheid, particularly Prime Minister Verwoerd, thought to emulate in their own policy of "separate development." Separate black "nations" would be given "self-government" and eventually "independence" and they could all, eventually, form part of a South African "commonwealth" that would extend beyond just the former "homelands," now converted into states, and would include the former High Commission Territories, members of the South African Customs Union since 1910, and other southern-African states.

Just as the racist state had been created and developed under the secure protection from external danger of the Pax Britannica, apartheid could still depend on a global balance of power that favored the West, to whose position in that balance it claimed to make an important contribution on account of its economic resources and simply by being what it was: an inherently anti-socialist white republic. For its part, it tried to show its strategic usefulness not only by providing naval and communications facilities and by devoting, since the early 1960s, vast resources to the building of an impressive war machine, but, since the mid-1970s, by increasing military actions against neighbors to defeat what appeared to Western strategists a palpable Communist offensive in South Africa.¹¹

The mid-1970s are a significant period, for in the wake of Vietnam and with the collapse of Portugal, metropolis and empire alike, the balance of power seemed to be changing decisively in Africa, causing real apprehension and uncertainty in Pretoria. But it would not be until the unexpected electoral victory of ZANU in Zimbabwe, and the failure of imperial influence which it signified, that South Africa would seek to attract Western support and commitment through its own acts of military self-assertion in Africa, while attempting to foreclose any development of economic relations between the West and a substantial part of the continent. It would prove its military worth as a power and the scourge of the "Communists" while interposing itself between the world and southern Africa so that nothing could be achieved in southern Africa without its cooperation.

At a time when Western powers were constrained by public opinion at home and by economic pressures from maintaining the "balance of power" by means of military intervention wherever the need arose, South Africa could assume the burden in a region considered important. But its own specific interests would come first, so that its role as ally and agent would emerge out of a commitment process in which it would entangle the West inextricably in the defense of its own domestic political system. If Western power has

11. See, among others, Western Massachusetts Association of Concerned African Scholars, *U.S. Military Involvement in Southern Africa* (Boston, 1978); *South Africa: Time Running Out: The Report of the Study Commission on US Policy toward Southern Africa* (London, 1981), pt. II.

throughout been an aid to South African policy toward Africa and even to its survival in Africa, South African influence in Africa, for its part, might gain it a more sympathetic hearing in the counsels of Western globalists.¹²

Much depends on the success of this dual strategy, not only in terms of the external support given or withheld from those who seek to overthrow apartheid, but also in regard to the confidence of the whites in South Africa themselves, and therefore to the legitimation of the regime. It was no coincidence that the greatest period of doubt and division among the dominant whites since 1948 began in the middle 1970s, a period that has been characterized as one of "hegemonic crisis,"¹³ the difficulties of which remained unresolved despite the launching of a "total strategy" for the defense of white domination and even its apparent successes at home and abroad.¹⁴

Yet with its own internal problems persisting and its own future essentially uncertain, Pretoria occasionally finds that some Western spoons at its banquet are long. That a West which has had to accept the loss of many once indispensable regional allies might yet be obliged to accept the passing of white rule in South Africa still remains the fundamental source of anxiety for South African policy makers.

THE FIRST PHASE, 1956–1962

South African politics in the first phase of the transfer of power was characterized by the growing militancy of the African nationalist struggle, the growth of black trade unionism, and recurrent incidents of popular protest. In some areas, notably Pondoland, there was revolt. Afrikaner nationalist power was consolidated with the elimination of the last vestiges of multiracialism in the constitution, the growth of a police state, and the progressive implementation of so-called separate development. There was a radicalization of African politics, reflecting both the increasing severity of Afrikaner nationalist rule and changing social character of the nationalist movement. The growth of the African working class, together with the beginnings of radical trade unionism and the cooperation of the African National Congress (ANC) with the white Left, all helped to shift the movement from its moderate gradualism of prewar years. Although the Pan-African Congress (PAC) broke off from the ANC in part

12. This has been so almost since the foundation of the South African state. For the recent period this theme is developed in S.C. Nolutshungu, "South African Policy and United States Options in Southern Africa," in G. J. Bender, J. S. Coleman, and R. J. Sklar, *African Crisis Areas and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, 1985).

13. Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development*, pp. 398ff.

14. R. Davies and D. O'Meara, "Total Strategy in Southern Africa: An Analysis of South African Regional Policy since 1978," in *Journal of Southern African Studies* 11, 2 (1985).

out of an ideological rejection of this very radicalism, it too, under the influence of the prevailing conditions in South Africa and the ferment in the continent as a whole, had a militant populist character. By the end of the 1950s the triumph of Afrikaner nationalism in white politics was matched by an increasingly organized popular challenge from the blacks. The culmination of this dialogue of the deaf was the massacre of black protesters at Sharpeville in March 1960, the banning of the ANC and PAC a year later, and the recourse of both to armed struggle.¹⁵ In 1962 the creation of the police state was completed with the passing of the General Laws Amendment Act, introducing long periods of detention without trial, retrospective incrimination, mandatory sentences for "sabotage" widely defined, and modification of the law of evidence and procedure where political prisoners were concerned. A reign of terror was initiated, and detention in solitary confinement and torture became the principal means of suppressing anti-apartheid activity.

On both sides the advent of African independence had made the attainment of political objectives more urgent. When it became impossible for the banned movements to continue in the old peaceful ways, they based the new phase of armed struggle in neighboring independent countries. Such developments fed a certain nervousness among whites but also created a siege mentality that enabled the ruling party to secure their complete submission to its leadership. In this atmosphere of crisis it was able to introduce departures in policy that might otherwise have been resisted by its fissiparous following, and at the same time to make any kind of meaningful opposition within the white polity difficult.

The party's earlier emphasis on Afrikaner unity gave way to a new focus on white unity that enabled it to depart from many of its earlier ideological commitments. The idea of popular capitalism, responsive to the interests of the party's predominantly petty-bourgeois following, conceived in opposition to Jewish, English, and foreign capitalism, could decisively give way to the growth of Afrikaner monopolies with state support and increasingly cooperating with their non-Afrikaans counterparts. The state itself became increasingly responsive to the needs of the dominant capitalist interests regardless of their ethnic composition.¹⁶

With the coming of the republic in 1961 and South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth, empire loyalty disappeared as a significant force among the English-speaking population, who responded positively to the enticements of "white unity." The main opposition party in Parliament, the United

15. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in Southern Africa* (London, 1983); Magubane, *Race and Class in South Africa*; D. A. Kotze, *African Politics in Southern Africa, 1964-74: Parties and Issues* (London, 1975).

16. O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme*, pt. IV.

Party, found it impossible to define credible alternatives to government policy, and the only opposition that was opposition at all came from the one representative of the Progressive party with a seat in Parliament. The Progressive party, which advocated a qualified franchise that would produce a multiracial, if still white-dominated, state, was a party of well-to-do non-Afrikaner intellectuals and was to remain so for over a decade and a half. Liberalism, never a powerful force in white politics, suffered greatly from the measures designed to suppress "communism" and black nationalism and from the increasing emigration of liberal intellectuals as apartheid became entrenched.¹⁷

Without significant opposition, the party greatly and speedily expanded the machinery of the state in all areas, most significantly in the functions of internal repression and external defense. The proliferation of parastatal economic agencies was an important means of creating opportunity for Afrikaner accumulation and upward social mobility. *Embourgeoisement* produced a more cosmopolitan racism less and less shackled by traditional ethnic Afrikaner shibboleths, but for that very reason producing deep resentments among those in the party who felt that they were not doing as well as they might and, among the privileged, rivalries and factionalism not just at party level but within the state machinery itself. These would become more evident much later, but in the first phase of decolonization much was shrouded by the common anxiety over African nationalism.¹⁸

Contrary to previous Afrikaner nationalist attitudes, the government encouraged white immigration to improve the white-black population balance and to supply the white skilled labor that would be required to maintain the system of discrimination in employment. A significant proportion of immigrants were former white settlers fleeing from African nationalism farther north (during 1961–1973 some 130,000 out of a total of 458,000).¹⁹

If mounting black discontent at home and decolonization elsewhere caused anxiety in South Africa, the performance of the economy and the apparent effectiveness of the system of economic and political coercion encouraged investment from abroad and expansion by local industries. The economy could bear the costs of the arms buildup and of state restructuring and expan-

17. On liberalism, see J. Robertson, *Liberalism in South Africa, 1948–1963* (London, 1971); P. C. Van der Bergh, ed., *The Liberal Dilemma in South Africa* (London, 1979), chaps. 1–5; P. B. Rich, *White Power and the Liberal Conscience: Racial Segregation and South African Liberalism, 1921–60* (Manchester, 1984).

18. H. Giliomee, "Afrikaner Politics: How the System Works," in H. Adam and H. Giliomee, eds., *Ethnic Power Mobilized* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1979).

19. *South Africa 1984: Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1984), p. 286; see also Angola Comité et al., *White Migration to Southern Africa* (Geneva, 1975); J. Stone, *Colonist or Uitlander: A Study of the British Immigrant in South Africa* (Oxford, 1973).

sion. So long as South Africa seemed internally stable and was an attractive home for investors as well as a valuable trading partner, all the anger and protest of independent African countries could not move the Western powers to support any punitive measures, however slight, against apartheid.²⁰

In international affairs South Africa stuck close to a Western cold-war line. In Africa it seemed that the cold war might open opportunities for Pretoria when, during the Congo crisis, South African mercenaries went to fight against Lumumba and South Africa itself provided facilities for the recruitment of mercenaries. That marked the beginning of an association with, and reliance upon, mercenaries, in semi-clandestine collaboration with other powers, which would later become important.

Apart from offers of cooperation on the basis of noninterference, South Africa had no clear policy toward the emerging black states. It was not ready for regular diplomatic relations nor was it confident that it could significantly influence opinion in the independent countries. Even for the neighboring white regimes of the Rhodesias and the Portuguese colonies there was more sympathy than decisive, committed aid.

After some desultory efforts by the foreign minister to meet black leaders and consultations with some of them at international gatherings before 1960, the period following Sharpeville was one of virtually total isolation. South African efforts concentrated on a propaganda counteroffensive largely directed at Western opinion rather than African or Asian. Yet even in embracing isolation, Prime Minister Verwoerd foresaw the opportunity of using South Africa's economic might to tie adjacent states firmly to South Africa as they emerged to independence, and he even considered that the withdrawal of British imperial power might make such states more amenable to South African approaches.²¹

THE SECOND PHASE, 1964–1968

The period that began with Zambia's independence and ended with Swaziland's accession to independent statehood was one of internal strength for the white regime, whose reign of terror had virtually extinguished mass nationalist politics within the country, made possible the recruitment of collaborators around whom the system of "self-governing" Bantustans could be constructed, and above all assured the continued high esteem of South Africa in the West as an economic partner and informal strategic ally.

20. Except for the imperfectly applied arms embargo under the U.N. Security Council Resolution of 1979, the first under Chapter VII of the Charter since the issue of South Africa was first raised in 1946.

21. Nolutshungu, *South Africa in Africa*, p. 86.

Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) was the single most important development for South Africa: it gave it a new importance in the region and created further grounds for hope so far as the consolidation and political use of its economic power were concerned.²² Yet, at the same time, the era of guerrilla struggles then beginning kept alive African hostility to the apartheid state and portended future difficulty.

Verwoerd had at first been against the Rhodesians proclaiming UDI, fearing that this might focus unwelcome international attention on South Africa itself. Once UDI had been declared, settler independence enjoyed South African economic support that defeated international sanctions for fourteen years. More important, South Africa was able to encroach on Rhodesian markets in Zambia and Malawi while gaining prestige when regarded by Britain as a crucial factor in the resolution of the Rhodesian problem. As a trial run for eventual international action against South Africa itself, the UDI experience was more reassuring than disquieting for Pretoria.

The African boycott of South Africa was breached, due to the pressure of necessity in the case of Zambia and the emergent states of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland, by deliberate choice in the case of Malawi. Even in the case of Swaziland and Lesotho cooperation with South Africa in this period did more than respond to immediate need.

As the liberation struggles grew in the Portuguese colonies, Portugal opened up possibilities for cooperation with South Africa, not only in counter-insurgency but also for long-term development projects, such as the Cabora Bassa dam project in Mozambique to supply electricity to South Africa and the Cunene River project in southern Angola. In both cases, South Africa was investing to encourage the Portuguese to stay in Africa, and to stay within a context of a widening dependence on the South African economy.

If it appeared that white minority regimes might just halt the tide of African nationalism at the Zambezi, African states themselves seemed less and less able to hasten the pace of change in the south. The prestige of African independence for its part was being progressively tarnished by a succession of political crises that left the continent more divided and more externally dependent at every turn. When Nigeria fell into a bloody civil war, South Africa once again supplied mercenaries to the secessionist side. In Rhodesia, emboldened by the dilatory British attitude to the rebellion and a solicitous disposition toward Pretoria itself, South Africa dispatched troops to fight with Ian Smith's men against a ZAPU-cum-ANC force, "police" troops that remained for a considerable period in defiance of international protests.

From their position of exile, and with innumerable practical difficulties of

22. T. Chalcraft, "Apartheid and White Settler Rebellion," in University of York Centre for Southern African Studies, *Collected Papers* 5.

access to the home population, the African National Congress was able to sustain a sufficient level of guerrilla activity to retain its legitimacy among black South Africans and its credibility with supporters abroad. It campaigned successfully to maintain the African states' agitation against Pretoria (in international affairs) and to keep alive the pan-African spirit of the early 1960s that had produced the boycotts. Pretoria never once became complacent about its temporary advantage over the liberation movement or once underestimated the latent support for the ANC among the black population.

Nowhere was South African confidence and truculence more evident than in the continued occupation of Namibia in defiance of the United Nations and of a rapidly growing armed resistance led by the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO)—also forced to base its leadership outside its home territory. SWAPO and the ANC were the main reasons for seeking to maintain the white-ruled buffers to the north and for the economic diplomacy applied to that end.

Toward the end of the period, Prime Minister Vorster, succeeding Verwoerd, could initiate a diplomatic offensive in Africa, offering "dialogue" with African states, which a significant minority, led by the Ivory Coast, were prepared to entertain. In the event, the boycott was upheld, and dialogue never extended beyond the more or less discreet collaboration with a handful of particularly conservative regimes (putting aside those who, while constrained to trade with South Africa, upheld the policy of politically and diplomatically isolating it).

It was in this period that South Africa began to apply military pressure on Zambia, largely through border violations and intimidating incursions into its airspace. It acted to prevent any easy movement of guerrillas between Zambia and Botswana by militarizing the Caprivi Strip, from which many of the border violations originated, and to block the construction of a bridge linking the two countries.

Yet, at this stage, South Africa was relatively restrained and may also have acted to check the Rhodesians in regard to Zambia. There were many reasons—including the low intensity of the operations against South Africa itself, the perceived economic possibilities in Zambia and the diplomacy of Kaunda—but the main ones were twofold. First, it was convenient to maintain the image of legality that sustained the Western policy of treating Pretoria as potentially helpful in the management of the problems of the West in the area. Vorster preferred to rely on economic inducement and subversion through the agencies he directly controlled rather than risk alienating crucial Western allies. Second, Pretoria was engaged in its outward-looking policy and was confident of turning the tide in Africa by the far less costly means of diplomacy. So long as the buffers held there was no urgent reason to do otherwise.

Within South Africa, despite the successful suppression of mass politics and

trade-union activity, opposition continued even within the ethnic political structures devised for blacks. The policy toward Africans stagnated, both with regard to the urban areas and the development of the Bantustans. Under a policy of industrial decentralization there emerged significant opportunities for some white businesses and for state corporations in some of the Bantustans, and a stratum of the African population was able to amass private fortunes.²³ Popular interest in these institutions, however, was low, and the government-appointed leaders seemed uninterested in building up a following outside their assigned domains, except one—Gatsha Buthelezi whose position with regard to the Bantustans was in any event ambivalent. The Coloured Representative Council ground to a complete deadlock and eventually failed, prompting a protracted debate among Afrikaners about the future of the Coloured population.²⁴

Almost unremarked until the 1970s were the beginnings of a revival of nationalist politics among students and young intellectuals with the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement. Toward the end of the decade and in the beginning of the 1970s, a revival of working-class militancy began, first in Namibia and then in South Africa itself.²⁵ White South Africa was, nevertheless, more preoccupied with divisions that were becoming apparent in the ruling National party itself. If none of this constituted an immediate threat to the power bloc, it did signify that no political problem had been solved either.

Skilled-labor shortages imposed by the racialist restrictions, a restricted market for manufactures resulting from low incomes and high unemployment among blacks at home, and the external boycott continued to create problems for the further development of the economy and stimulated pressure for some modification of apartheid. The workers' restiveness in the early 1970s, coupled with inflation and a persistent structural balance of payments problem, indicated that further industrial advance could not be achieved without some reform. Though substantial increases in the price of gold would mask some of these problems for a while, the era of high growth rates was coming to a close.

THE THIRD PHASE, 1974–1976

Although South African officials had begun to show signs of apprehension about the progress of the guerrilla war in Mozambique by the beginning of the

23. See, among others, R. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei: The Political Economy of an Independent Bantustan* (London, 1982); N. M. Stultz, *Transkei's Half-Loaf: Race Separation in South Africa* (New Haven and London, 1979).

24. See P. Hugo, *Quislings or Realists: A Documentary Study of "Coloured" Politics in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1978).

25. Du Toit, *Capital and Labour in South Africa*, pt. III.

1970s and were quite clearly also concerned about the ability of the Rhodesians to cope, the collapse of the fascist regime in Portugal and the accession of Mozambique and Angola to self-government and independence came as a complete and most unwelcome surprise.

Still believing in the possibility of détente with black Africa and uncertain of its options and of Western support, Vorster's initial reaction to Mozambique was uncertain, tending toward accommodation. Internal division and incipient civil war in Angola encouraged South Africa to seek an active role in support of the most reactionary elements among the blacks and to prepare for direct intervention. When war erupted, South Africa invaded in support of a divided and, in the event, ineffective alliance of UNITA (Uniao para a Independencia Total de Angola) and FNLA (Frente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola), who enjoyed Western, particularly American, support and relied on mercenaries. The South African invasion did not receive the open support of the West. African countries that might have encouraged this bold move either by directly soliciting it or by their indirect policies of détente with Pretoria, failed to come out openly in defense of it, limiting themselves to opposing any OAU condemnation that did not simultaneously condemn the Soviet-Cuban involvement on the side of the MPLA (Movimento para a Libertação de Angola).²⁶

There can be little doubt that the South African military felt that in Angola their hour had come, and when they failed they found the *Dolchstosz* in the failure of Vorster's diplomacy and the lack of a supportive political climate at home. From then on they would seek and assert a larger role for themselves under their defense minister, P. W. Botha, a contender for the National party leadership and a faction leader within it.

South Africa's long survival, its persistent regional domination, and the crises it imposes on its neighbors all suggest that the consummation of African decolonization was never to be accomplished in the ceremonials of independence but in greater upheavals yet to come. For those in southern Africa, at least, the radical transformation of South Africa itself may be the essential and central part of that liberation.

The changes in South Africa's external situation were aggravated by global developments that had little to do with southern Africa itself. Among these was the oil crisis, which not only brought in its wake a prospect of oil boycotts and increased so-called third-world influence generally on the West but also, within Africa, raised the importance of Nigeria as a rival market, for Western powers might betray South Africa in exchange for economic advantages in the

26. J. Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, vol. 2, *Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare*, 1962-1976 (Cambridge, Mass., 1978); J. Klinghoffer, *The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World* (Boulder, 1980); C. Gabriel, *Angola: le tournant africain?* (Paris, 1978), pt. II.

rest of Africa. Nigeria had a definite impact on British behavior with regard to Zimbabwe and did to some extent modify United States attitudes toward Angola and Mozambique during the Carter years. It was a factor to be considered in any policy toward South Africa.

In the West's view, nothing contributed more to a sense of crisis and of doubt concerning South Africa's future than the eruption of mass struggles in the cities on an unprecedented scale, led by students and school children who had been directly influenced by the radical decolonisation in southern Africa and the perceived defeat of South Africa in Angola. Once more the transfer of power elsewhere raised passions and expectations in South Africa itself, now in a more militant and ideologically more radical frame of reference. Economic hardship experienced by blacks, as the recession began to be felt in South Africa, also intensified popular resentments. It was apparent that the spirit of revolt could not long be confined to the young but would eventually engage the black working class as well, and this gave rise to an urgent search for new ways to pacify and control the urban proletariat. It was in these circumstances that the Wiehahn and Riekert commissions produced their reports on the reform of labor law and "influx control," the control of the movement of Africans in the country.

The Soweto Riots, as the urban revolt came to be known, produced a new crop of exiles who joined and, in large measure, reanimated the exiled liberation movement. With the triumph of FRELIMO and MPLA many blacks in South Africa, and indeed whites as well, saw a similar role for the ANC, and there followed an open ANC revival which the modernizing racial oligarchy could neither accommodate nor subdue. That, too, was a problem it would attempt to solve externally by the methods of counter-insurgency.

THE FOURTH PHASE, 1979-1985

Zimbabwe's independence marked the final collapse of the system of white-ruled buffer states for South Africa and the final failure of its attempts to influence and contain the transfer of power. As the independence of Angola and Mozambique had done, the transfer of power to former guerrillas highlighted to white South Africans their vulnerability and the inadequacy of their previous policies for coping with decolonization in the rest of Africa and black discontent within South Africa. With the balance of power, and of confidence, dramatically changing in the region, there was an urgent need to create a new basis, a new structure, of domestic power and to pursue more decisive African and international politics.

P. W. Botha had acceded to the premiership in the last year of the Zimbabwean war in a bitterly divisive succession that pitted the different Afrikaner

political bases, regional ones and those within the state machinery itself, against each other.²⁷ The ruling National party was in crisis as different factions quarreled about the most appropriate adaptations to be made—for “reform” was already firmly on the agenda—and conflicting political ambitions produced a competitive search for allies, which tended to underline class divisions that for some time had been evident within Afrikanerdom but were now being exacerbated by adverse economic circumstances. The economy was stagnating and the levels of unemployment and industrial unrest were growing, while the cumulative effects of white super-wages and heavy defense expenditure were producing the inevitable inflationary pressures. Foreign investors’ confidence, which had dropped after Soweto, did not fully recover while the international recession was aggravating the problem. Businessmen increasingly realized, and the government more or less accepted, that further expansion of the economy would not be possible without substantial liberalization of the black labor market and a general expansion of the role of blacks in the economy, both as consumers and investors and as manpower at all levels of skill. The idea of meeting the need for skilled labor within the framework of job reservation through assisted white immigration had proved both costly and impractical.

Yet, reform would divide whites and could not, in any event, fail to encourage black workers to agitate for greater change. At the beginning of Botha’s rule there was no thought of sharing power in any way with the African population or even of fundamentally undermining the principle of treating blacks as essentially a source of cheap, rightless labor, whose political aspirations would have to be satisfied in the Bantustans. Similarly, if the reform of various racist laws was being contemplated, there was nevertheless no willingness to dispense with the police state measures designed to contain democratic demands.

With growing international criticism, especially in the West, and increasing doubt about Pretoria’s capacity to maintain stability, the Botha government had to restore confidence among South Africa’s supporters in the West. The deterioration of relations between the United States and South Africa that had occurred under Vorster carried obvious dangers for future American strategic military and political support for minority rule in a subcontinent now considered to be fully within the grasp of Soviet power, as well as to short- and medium-term business confidence.²⁸ Changing South Africa’s image, always

27. The infighting within the state machinery became public knowledge when the so-called Muldergate scandal exploded, revealing a slush fund that implicated the former prime minister, B. J. Vorster, Connie Mulder, P. W. Botha’s rival for the premiership, and the director of information, Eschel Rhoodie.

28. On U.S.–South Africa relations under Carter and Vorster, see K. Danaher, *The Political Economy of United States Policy Toward South Africa* (Boulder, 1984), chap. 5.

a concern of foreign policy since the first attacks on apartheid in the United Nations after the war, now became a central concern of policy not only at the level of propaganda but also in terms of real confidence-building measures. In the area of civil rights there was some limited relaxation of censorship, and greater latitude was given to workers and community groups to organize and express themselves than would have been conceivable under Vorster.

Power and privilege over three decades had also left their mark on the Afrikaner dominant classes. Many elements of the racist ideology no longer carried conviction either as a means of understanding the complex social reality of South Africa and the world around it or, perhaps more important, as a source of strategies of "survival." Increasingly the Afrikaner meritocracy would look for its guidance to a more cosmopolitan bourgeois ideology—a quest reinforced by cultural and educational exchanges as well as intergovernmental cooperation at various levels with the United States. The military and Botha, who as defense minister had masterminded it for over a decade, became the source of the new ideology for survival culled from the prevailing, Western theories of counter-insurgency. In the particular circumstances of the early 1980s the anticommunism of these doctrines was reinforced by a positive assertion of capitalist values and practice as being in themselves the ideological content of counter-insurgency—far more than were liberal notions of human rights, liberty, and democracy. In short, giving full scope to capitalists, established and new, to ply their trade, was part of a global conservatism—the New Right position—which provided the ideological basis in South Africa for the attempt to build a new consensus behind the strategies for survival based on counter-insurgency. With these new doctrines the white oligarchy had no further use for traditional racial doctrines except in so far as they were still instrumental in maintaining white political supremacy, securing social control, and maintaining the degree of white unity necessary to these ends. To many in the ruling party it was still evident that many of their following would still be vulnerable to black competition and the uncertainties of untrammelled capitalism. Nevertheless, although racialism and ethnic myths still clung to the hearts and minds of most whites, it became clear, all the same, that established racialist precepts would be disregarded—or discarded—if the interests of the ruling class so demanded: subject always to the fact that both ruling class and state were racially constituted.

The strategy for conserving racial domination was defined as a policy of winning hearts and minds at home to support a total strategy against the external dangers thought to amount to a "total onslaught" by Communists on South Africa.²⁹ The Botha government envisaged some concessions to blacks to win their support, a policy of divide and rule on racial and class lines: giving

29. Stated in South African Defence White Papers 1975 and 1979.

political rights to Coloureds and Indians, while encouraging the development of a black middle class that would act as a moderating factor often directly incorporated into the structures of control, both urban and rural. While racial segregation would continue, many features of "petty apartheid" would be abandoned. While internal repression would remain, the emphasis of security policy would be on meeting external danger from the African National Congress and SWAPO and from the mere existence of radical socialist regimes in neighboring countries.

Changes did indeed occur under Botha, though few of these could be considered reforms. The enactment of a new constitution giving Coloureds and Indians voting rights in a three-tier parliamentary system was more a means of tying these groups firmly to the defense of white privilege than a departure from racialism or a step toward democratization. It was specifically tied to a diminution of parliamentary power and a substantial increase in the power of the prime minister, who now became the state president, served by a President's Council.³⁰ Furthermore, the massive constraints imposed on opponents of the reforms, and the manner in which the constitution was imposed, all indicated the limitations of these improvements.

Similarly, while workers were allowed to form trade unions and, under strict limitations, even given the right to strike, authoritarian and often violent repression was the characteristic response to trade-union action. Limited scope for multiracial education in private schools and in the universities affected only a tiny fraction of the black middle class, while it went nowhere toward redressing the grievances that had provoked the protests of 1976–1978. The most symbolic reform of racist law, the repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act and the Immorality Act, which now made possible marriage and sex between whites and blacks, could only affect a very few individuals and made no difference to the restrictions on residence or citizenship of the black partner or spouse, or, in the event, the "non-white" progeny of such couples.

The most important effect of Botha's reforms in the first five to six years was in making apartheid doctrine and practice less coherent, provoking opposition from some sections of the white population, expectations of more reform on the part of others, and deepening dissatisfaction among all blacks. Coloureds and Asians found the reforms inadequate and many rejected the idea of a racist anti-African alliance.

For whites to have thus categorically excluded the African majority from power sharing (even as illusory as that envisaged in the new constitution) and to have constructed a new racial alliance to perpetuate their suppression was a provocation to the African population and an act of political ineptitude that

30. Briefly discussed in D. Austin, *South Africa 1984* (London, 1985), pp. 22–28.

could only be explained in terms of the strange combination of complacency and desperation that characterises white political responses. It was all the more ill timed given the seething discontent in the townships that was daily being aggravated by the deepening economic crisis.

Paradoxically, black mobilization had benefited from a comparative relaxation of direct repression that had followed Vorster's departure. And equally paradoxical was the fact that the government's single-minded campaign against the ANC in neighbouring countries had confirmed the ANC revival that had followed the mass struggles of 1976–1978. Internal repression had lightened somewhat for a number of reasons that had little to do with either democratization or a suddenly increased regard for human rights on the part of the rulers. To win hearts and minds did necessitate some measure of toleration of those not identified with the insurgent threat. More important, the machinery of internal political repression, particularly the secret police, had fallen into some disarray following the Botha succession. The Bureau of State Security (BOSS)—previously closely associated (through its dominant chief) with Vorster personally—was dismantled and reconstituted with a changed leadership and reduced autonomy and prestige after the fall of the Vorster faction. Furthermore, there was less emphasis on the control of internal political discussion (especially among whites themselves), because of the emphasis on the military threat seen as essentially external and because during the reconstitution of a white consensus and in the creation of new alliances it was not possible to define precisely the limits of permitted discourse. Total strategy had a built-in tendency to exaggerate the range of hearts and minds that could be won in exchange for very little or nothing at all. The State nevertheless reserved the right to curb discussion and to silence opponents, and it did not lack the means to do so—as it was to show with the repression of the leadership of the United Democratic Front and through the use of police and military terror against urban protestors in the course of 1985.

The combination of continued repression and attempts to forge more lasting alliances for domination, on the one hand, and limited relaxation of political controls on the other, had the fully predictable result in 1985 when the black population exploded in the most extensive, and the bitterest, revolt ever. The revolt was distinguished by three features that demonstrated the failure of the total strategy. It was a broadly based popular revolt including, significantly, elements of the population groups that were to have been bought off under the Botha reforms, most notably the Coloured population of the Western Cape. With the revolt, support for the multiracial United Democratic Front and for the African National Congress grew immensely and was openly displayed both in the demands for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, as well as in the open use of ANC emblems and

insignia. Finally, popular anger was focused on those who were being incorporated as collaborators in the counter-insurgency strategy as it applied to the black population.

Shaken by the collapse of foreign business confidence and by consumer boycotts, a section of the white business class as well as other white opinion leaders repudiated the basic premise of the total strategy designed to crush the ANC (while buying off significant elements of the domestic population) by openly proclaiming the need for a dialogue with it and themselves traveling to Zambia to talk to leaders of the organization. Reform would have to be rethought, and power sharing with the Africans had to become part of any new effort to forestall revolution.

The last phase of African decolonization had seen, and had helped to produce, an internal crisis within South Africa from which there appeared no probable issue without a sharing of power leading to the inevitable transfer of the reins of government from a colonial polity to majority rule. But white South Africa faced an *external* crisis as well in southern Africa, and the response to the radical decolonization of neighboring territories was integrally related to the attempts to save the colonial order within South Africa.

Despite the bombast and the apparent savoir-faire of the official pronouncements on the total strategy, South Africa's foreign-policy response to the crisis of decolonization in South Africa was not always coherent or purposeful, suffered several self-inflicted defeats, and produced ambiguous and evanescent victories. It failed to eliminate the principal threats to white domination just as it failed to secure dependable support for Pretoria's own domestic and external objectives.

South Africa's response in this period can be briefly described. It aimed to remove the threat posed by the ANC to itself and by SWAPO to its interests in Namibia; to secure decisive South African hegemony in the subcontinent for these political reasons but also with a view to facilitating its own economic expansion; finally, it hoped to use its position and policies in Southern Africa to secure Western support that would in its turn confirm the security of the racist oligarchy.³¹

After the victory of ZANU in the Zimbabwean elections South Africa became less confident of engineering an electoral outcome in Namibia that would exclude SWAPO from power, and from that time on felt confirmed in a policy of continued occupation and increasingly direct military control of the territory. The war against SWAPO would be continued in earnest, with pressure on Angola being escalated. In the first few years of Botha's administration this became part of a general policy of destabilization directed against the radical

31. Davies and O'Meara, "Total Strategy in Southern Africa."

states—particularly Angola and Mozambique—intended to prevent their consolidation and the normalization of their economic relations with other countries. The election of Reagan to the supreme office in the United States and the ensuing change of U.S. policy toward Africa emboldened Pretoria's attacks on its neighbors, fitting it into a wider U.S. strategy for the destabilization of Soviet-backed regimes.

Washington's preoccupation with Angola gave South Africa some breathing space diplomatically so far as Namibia was concerned, particularly when the Reagan government chose to profit from South African military pressure to force political change in Angola, making this a precondition for a change in Namibia—the so-called linkage policy.³² South African and U.S. cooperation was less explicit in other areas, though American sympathy for attacks on Mozambique and on the collaboration emerging between it and Zimbabwe made it possible for Pretoria to step up its support for the MNR (Movement for National Resistance) operating against the FRELIMO government.

Toward 1982 South African policy became more specifically directed at coercing neighboring states to disavow the ANC and to expel South Africans associated with it from their territories, whether or not such supporters were militant and politically active.³³ Simultaneously, the policy sought to coerce these countries to sign nonaggression pacts with Pretoria and to participate in its projected constellation of states, an economic project that became important when the Southern African Development Coordinating Council grouping the states in the region against South African economic dominance seemed to be attracting international financial support.³⁴ Battered by the drought as well as by the MNR attacks, socialist Mozambique became, in 1983, the first state to sign a nonaggression pact and to expel the ANC from its territory, agreeing to cooperation with Pretoria on economic and security matters. The effect of this pact, which won Botha acclaim in Western capitals as well as among whites at home, was to encourage further attacks on neighbors, including the far from radical Botswana and Lesotho.

Yet the Nkomathi Accord produced no lasting solution, and itself became a source of discord between its signatories when the MNR, backed by elements of the South African security forces, refused to suspend its attacks on Mozambique. An agreement for the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola, who had occupied the southern part of the country since 1981, broke down mainly because of South Africa's failure to fulfil its part in time but partly also because of the inflexibility of the U.S. position vis-à-vis Luanda, which was, as

32. G. J. Bender, "American Policy toward Angola: A History of Linkage," in Bender, Coleman, and Sklar, *African Crisis Areas*.

33. This was particularly so in the cases of Botswana and Lesotho.

34. Cf. D. G. Anglin, "SADCC after Nkomathi," in *African Affairs* 84, 335 (1985).

has already been indicated, tied to the U.S. attitude to South African policy generally and to the Namibian issues in particular. The result was a strengthening of the ties between Angola and the Soviet Union and Cuba. Although South Africa came to adopt the American linkage view, the Cuban issue was of secondary importance to its own policy, which was to avoid a U.N. settlement of the Namibian issue and to keep SWAPO out by all available means.³⁵

Yet counsels within the military on the importance of Namibia for South Africa's defense were divided; the war was becoming unpopular in the country, and the prospects of successfully creating a stable neocolonial regime in Namibia were becoming poorer.³⁶ The Botha government's persistence could only be explained in terms of strategic considerations that went beyond the issue of Namibia itself. Domestically, the policy of reform was causing doubts among many of Botha's Nationalist supporters to such an extent that any softening of policy on Namibia might be expected to strengthen the right-wing opposition to the Botha faction. Second, role seeking by ambitious military men, and indeed the concept of counter-insurgency underlying the total strategy, were hardly likely to favor a peaceful resolution of the Namibian issue. Botha's accession to the premiership had been marked by a decisive rejection of the diplomacy of enticement, and limited subversion, of his predecessors in favor of massive visible strikes against recalcitrant neighbors. Finally, and strategically most important, was the international role that the Namibian war gave Pretoria with regard to Western interests. Namibia was the base and the pretext for South African involvement in Angola, without which the loss of white South African lives and the expenditure of resources in Angola might be difficult to justify to white parents and voters. South Africa's role in Angola made it a valued ally to the United States in an area where Washington could not easily exert direct military influence, because of domestic political opposition. United States policy makers had elevated the aim of eliminating the Cuban presence in Angola into a major symbolic objective of their African policy in the context of a global policy of rolling back the Soviet victories of the post-Vietnam period. In rendering service to the United States in this area Pretoria hoped to rely on Washington's goodwill in the battles that remained to be fought over apartheid.

The global dimension of South African destabilization is of the first importance not only in highlighting the considerable unity of strategic interests

35. Cf. D. Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making* (Johannesburg, 1984), pp. 222–31, and R. I. Rotberg, "Namibia and the Crisis of Constructive Engagement," in Bender, Coleman, and Sklar, *African Crisis Areas*.

36. With the collapse of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and the increasing military control of the territory, it became even more difficult to create a credible internal political force to oppose SWAPO.

between the apartheid regime and the capitalist bloc generally; it is even more significant to an understanding of the unity between South African domestic and foreign policy. Whether the defense of racial supremacy or of capitalist class interests ("free enterprise") was emphasized, Pretoria never lost sight of the need to entangle the West in its own policies by translating its position into a role of global significance in the defense of international capital. By the same token, foreign policy had no other objective nearly as important as preserving white political dominance, considered both by South African capitalists and by international capitalists as the foremost condition for the defense of those interests—though differences might exist about the desirable or feasible forms and extent of that dominance. No significant state within the Western alliance had yet been able to provide the least evidence, by its own conduct, that these interests could be uncoupled more or less voluntarily.

In this regard the dialectics of South Africa's cooperation with the United States in these years were an important aspect of South Africa's position in the final stages of that process of the transfer of power in Africa whose long history coincided almost exactly with apartheid rule in South Africa.

Before the explosions of 1985 South Africa's position in southern Africa seemed to be getting stronger. The subordination of Mozambique and, for a while, the apparent weakening of Angola's position and of Soviet support for it in 1982–1983 seemed to show that the total strategy worked.³⁷ Yet it was always evident, and events in 1985 demonstrated it most clearly, that South Africa might succeed too well externally and not sufficiently at home.³⁸ For if Angola and Mozambique were to change their ideological character and external relationships completely, there would be a reduced role for South Africa to play on behalf of Western interests. Its own interests might come to be in competition with those of the major Western states. By this grisly logic South Africa might have a greater interest in a condition of permanent instability and ideological confrontation than in a decisive "roll-back" of Soviet influence. That had been the original thrust of the "total strategy"—to disrupt and debilitate the Marxist governments without overthrowing them.

South Africa has consistently asserted its own interests in opposition to what might be presumed to be American concerns. There is no imaginable U.S. interest served by South African attacks on Botswana, Lesotho, and Zambia. In its own domestic politics Pretoria has been unwilling to make the concessions that would be necessary for the policy of "constructive engage-

37. See Bender, "American Policy toward Angola"; also S. Malley, "URSS-Tiers Monde: le style Gorbatchev," in *Afrique-Asie* (30 Dec. 1985).

38. For surveys of the situation in 1985 see, among many, *Washington Post*, 30 and 31 Dec. 1985.

ment" to be credible within the United States. Under pressure of public opinion, in the face of the police murders under the state of emergency in 1985, Washington, like London, was forced to exaggerate the reform-mindedness of the Botha regime. In 1985 Western governments began to impose sanctions on Pretoria, at this stage: token and ineffectual gestures but significant as an admission that constructive engagement had failed and as a pointer that popular opinion might in some circumstances demand political gestures that would be harmful to South Africa and disruptive of the collaboration presently being maintained. To be sure, when press and television coverage of South African events was sufficiently reduced due to draconian restraints imposed by Pretoria, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for Africa could revisit South Africa and reaffirm the relationship.³⁹ Nevertheless, confidence had been irretrievably undermined, and Pretoria was still unable to produce credible solutions to its political problems. In Angola the Cuban presence remained, and the Soviet commitment to help seemed likely to be increased rather than reduced.

CONCLUSION

South Africa survived the first three phases of the transfer of power in Africa better than its leaders had once feared it would. At various points, in the late 1960s and early 1970s and in the early 1980s, it even seemed to gain in strength and security over its enemies. African states have not in their quarter-century of independence succeeded in doing much more than isolate South Africa. Even that isolation is imperfect. The earlier fears that South Africa would threaten their own independence now seem more justified than ever.

Yet South Africa remains a pariah state. Its failures in Africa have been many and greater than its ambiguous victories. Those defeats have been the result of its domestic failure. Internal resistance to apartheid has grown in spite of the measures taken by Pretoria to isolate the internal anti-apartheid struggles from external support. Every wave of terror and repression visited on the black population is followed by more resistance, new working-class and community struggles in a many-sided struggle against the "total strategy." The program of reform has been discredited. It sought to buy industrial peace through limited liberalization of the labor laws but has reaped strife instead. It planned to construct a new racist consensus based on constitutional changes that were intended to ally the "enfranchised" Coloureds and Indians with the whites but has provoked militant rejection from both communities.

39. *The Guardian*, 15 Jan. 1985.

Slowly, and with the greatest reluctance, the white oligarchy has begun to see the reality that some form of power sharing with the Africans will eventually become unavoidable.⁴⁰ If that day is still considered to be far off, there is no shortage of plans for fragmenting the black population and for contriving political and constitutional arrangements that would make such sharing more formal than real. In this regard the Bantustans, no longer believed in as a solution to anything—the restoration of South African citizenship to their citizens being an admission of the hollowness of their claims to statehood—still have significance when seen against the possibility, in some future bargaining about power sharing, that the owners of these fiefdoms could be used to counterbalance more popular nationalist leaders. Yet practically every Bantustan seems destined, for so long as apartheid survives, to sink into economic misery and sanguinary strife. All South Africa's might and power could not save hundreds of Bantustan infants during the drought of the early 1980s. Could not or would not—for hunger was used as an instrument of policy against Mozambique and, in the wake of the struggles of 1985, against Lesotho also.⁴¹

South Africa's limited victories have served not only its own ends; nor are its own reluctant reforms encouraged by foreign powers only for its own preservation. Western countries have benefited from apartheid and hope to gain more both from its regional aggressions and its reforms. Like the process of African decolonization of which it is a part, the evolution of racialism in South Africa has reflected the broader ambiguities of the Western presence in Africa: the immanent crises of its relationship with dominated and exploited societies as well as its remarkable capacity for renewal in ever-changing forms.

40. Even the most "liberal" elements in the ruling oligarchy still do not envisage one man one vote within a unitary state, even as an ultimate possibility, but seem to favor a variety of racial confederations that would maintain decisive white political supremacy overall.

41. A South African blockade against Lesotho that caused food and fuel shortages in Jan. 1986 produced a pro-South African coup d'état that overthrew the government of Chief Leabua Jonathan, who was accused by Pretoria of harboring ANC guerrillas.

21. Conclusion

BASIL DAVIDSON

Ja! diesem Sinne bin ich ganz ergeben,
Das ist der Weisheit letzter Schluss:
Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben,
Der täglich sie erobern musz.

Goethe's stalwart affirmation is apposite. Some attempt at continuous reappraisal or synthesis may be useful in order to identify the issues that remain controversial as well as those on which the various chapters in this book seem to agree. One is surprised at the degree of unpredictable concordance even on thorny matters that have in the past produced sustained disagreement. The authors, despite a variety of background, conviction and approach, share a perception of crucial issues for the historiography of our times.

Briefly, the chapters not only assess the nature and limits of the transfer of power, or of various transfers of power over a short and critical period, but also analyze the consequences. The chapters reveal a solid level of agreement on two of these consequences that would scarcely have been probable, or even possible, a dozen years ago. One hundred years after the colonial "share out" associated with the Berlin Conference, it seems that we are at last getting beyond the minefields of defensive polemic. The colonial period is beginning to be seen *wie es eigentlich gewesen*, "as it really was"; the same may be said, no less usefully, of the immediate post-colonial period. Even while some of the elderly actors are on stage, or at any rate to be heard muttering in the wings, the drama is being reshaped as history.

The first conclusion is the general ossification in “post-transfer” Africa of a state apparatus—executive, administrative, legislative—that was from the beginning little more than an extension of the policies and institutions of the colonial period. The second conclusion is the prevalence of “post-colonial” policies (more inverted commas, more skepticism) by which rural communities have been treated in theory as the fount and origin of all developmental wealth but in practice as populations to be plundered by the state apparatus for its own parasitic purposes. What has been criticized in some chapters, in short, is not the basic reliance in Africa on the surplus producing (or the potential for it) of rural communities—an irreplaceable condition for any systemic development over time—but the persistent and now disastrous failure to use that surplus to good effect, to extract it for socially constructive ends, and the failure even to ensure that the colonial goose remains alive and fruitful after the post-colonial golden eggs are taken. The Zimbabwe conference met in 1985 under the shadow of a continental emergency to which no end could be descried. The continuing crisis in Africa can also be regarded as one resulting from short-sighted elitist nationalism and the legacy of colonial rule, as well as of transfer and post-transfer trials and tumults. Thus the analysis of consequences follows logically upon discussion of the transfer itself.

This discussion about transfers turns largely on a pair of related issues. Was there, to begin with, any consistent imperial plan to take account of and guide a movement toward independence? Second, in the outcome, was there in fact any transfer of power beyond the limits of political administration? Something, clearly, was transferred: but what really was this something? An accurate and precise answer is difficult to reach, and it is perhaps worthwhile to take account of the happy ambiguities of French, duly noting (if with a certain Anglo-Saxon hesitation) the difference between *transposition* and *transformation* of the power to rule and to decide. Generally, however, the something transferred was never, in any case, enough to enable a post-colonial thoroughgoing radical transformation through which descent into crisis might have been averted. Was any such reconstruction really possible in the majority of cases? A good question, no doubt, but of a kind that must be left for other assizes. History is not about what could have happened.

But was there any imperial “plan,” as so many apologists of empire have asked us to believe? As to the British African empire, some chapters have made short work of imperial claims to have pursued a mission of trusteeship in “preparing” Africans for independence or even for what used to be called “self-government.” If the “shortest and simplest” description of British colonial policy is “nation building,” as affirmed only a few years ago by no less an authority than Sir Hilton Poynton, permanent undersecretary at the Colonial

Office, little evidence is to be found in this book. The reforming advice of such distinguished authorities as Hailey and Coupland at the end of the 1930s was of course well known, but it apparently had little or no effect on what was actually done or intended, even after the formulation in the Colonial Office of what Ronald Robinson has called the "Cohen-Caine Report" of 1947. Decisive weight, in practice, remained with other persons and perspectives: for example, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, continued to affirm, with an indifference to realities hard to credit in retrospect, that Britain's great task after the war would be to maintain the status of a great world power with its colonial empire intact. And if Linlithgow's Labour party adversaries, notably Cripps and Bevin, were nonetheless able to evolve plans for colonial reform, these were still contained within the reach and realm of British national and imperial advantage. No one worked harder (or, one may think, more disastrously) than Ernest Bevin for the defence and prolongation of British imperial power. In this respect at least—but perhaps not only in this respect—Bevin was the other side of a single coin named Churchill.

The orthodox British insistence on nation building has been repeatedly questioned in this book. J. F. Ade. Ajayi and A. E. Ekoko challenge the view that British decolonization flowed from decisions of the 1940s that were made to head off any "struggle for independence." They establish that "no conscious British initiative to liquidate the empire was apparent at the Nigerian end." Anthony Low explains that none of the colonial rulers of tropical African dependencies expected independence to be an early eventuality. The aim, rather, was to "fend off" in Africa the kind of nationalistic eruptions that had occurred in Asia. Nor does the case of Libya offer any evidence of a "plan" for general African independence. The chapter by Roger Louis demonstrates that Libya was part of a strategic scheme to conserve British imperial power and American influence in the Mediterranean and Middle East. In 1947, true enough, there was the Cohen-Caine nationalist forelock; but this long-term perspective had no practical effect on what was about to happen, as the sequel to the Burns Constitution in the Gold Coast rapidly proved. Martin Daly adds to the consensus by demonstrating that there was no plan for decolonization in the Sudan at least until 1952—until, that is, the Egyptian revolution had begun to change the whole outlook for the Nile Valley. Yet it was not until 1956, with the abortive British-French-Israeli assault on Suez, that the realities became apparent in Downing Street. In the case of Kenya (another favorite example of the British claim to political foresight in the "handling" of African nationalism), Bethwell Ogot sees the pace of transfer as dictated not by British plans or intentions but by the changing structure and character of the Kenyan economy and by the nationalist struggles led by the Land and Freedom armies of Mau Mau.

If there was no coherent or effective British plan to transfer power to Africans, but only an opportunist response to the pressures of African nationalism, still less was there any French plan. Almost up until the last day of direct French colonial rule, French orthodoxy had not totally abandoned the old concepts of assimilation and *la plus grande France*: in short, *ex ecclesia Galliae, nulla salus*. It took the debacle at Dien Bien Phu to breach that conviction, and even then, in Africa, according to Keith Panter-Brick, decolonization was the work of the nationalists themselves, who insisted on independence at the expense of France's own ideological and constitutional preferences. That generality holds true for all the governments of the Fourth Republic, and it was no less true of the Gaullist (Fifth) Republic; it too, like its predecessor, had to learn the lessons taught by African protest. For in tropical Africa, as Lansine Kaba has shown, only the precipitant and critical transfer of power in Guinea at the close of 1958 forced France to accept the immediacy of colonial independence.

Those who recall the Paris scene of those years may think, as I do, that this persistent clinging to French imperial positions (however disguised by the trappings of the Union Française) was as much an emotional response to the disasters of the Second World War as any kind of calculation: if the dignity of France had been horribly mangled in 1940, and then trampled in the mud for several terrible years, at least the empire should remain. But less emotional appraisal followed rapidly after de Gaulle's reverse at the hands of Sékou Touré; and events then moved fast.

As may be seen in her chapter, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch agrees with David Fieldhouse that the relative ease of the eventual French acceptance of the case for administrative and political transfer derived from two perceptions. The first was that no further insistence on direct colonial rule would be useful or worth the rising cost. The second was the emergence of the European Community. At least by 1947, moreover, Europe and the colonial dependencies were increasingly influenced, if not dominated, by American strategic and commercial policies. For reasons that appeared to be obvious in London and Paris, the Americans favored controlled decolonizations that left intact "the Western sphere of influence." On the French side, there was as much timely institutional adjustment to the necessity of independence as on the British side: the major exceptions, similarly, being in the countries of European settlement, notably Algeria.

The Belgians had no notion of any imminent or even remote Congolese accession to independence until the last moment, and little enough even then. The Portuguese of the Salazar dictatorship (effectively from 1926 to 1974) had to be driven to military defeat in Africa before any shift in attitudes became possible. There was a sharp contrast in the manner as well as the

outcome of these two withdrawals. The Belgians left behind them an ever more painful chaos, while the Portuguese eventually yielded to nationalist movements of unusual strength and organization. Neither the Belgians nor the Portuguese can be said to have transferred power in any coherent sense: the Belgians merely abandoned power, and the Portuguese had it taken from them. The outcome turned, here as elsewhere, on the maturity of the nationalist movements. Thus it was the relative measure of the Africans' own political development, and not that of the Europeans' planning or "preparation," that proved to be immediately decisive in the events of independence.

Although the British perhaps relinquished more power than the French, even in the British case nothing has been written here to contradict the well-nourished conclusion of Sir John Fletcher-Cooke, a former deputy governor of Tanganyika, speaking in 1978: Africans were not consulted about their own future, and no concerted plan was ever in view. It could accordingly be said that the colonial powers stumbled out of Africa as best they could, keeping their own interests always in view and at no time applying initiatives that were not, in one way or another, imposed or provoked by African pressures for anti-colonial change. This mode of behavior was of course in faithful line with the greed and egoism of every European nationalism, as of every other nation-state nationalism, and would be scarcely worth noting if it had not been for the moralistic self-congratulation of the colonial powers. The notion that their legacy in Africa might have been a burden, to be lightened to the advantage of colonial peoples, was never in fact an operative guide to what was done or not done. Observing later miseries, the once imperial reaction was a very simple one: "we" had done our best for "them," but "they," alas, had made a mess of it. "How could we have expected to anticipate what has happened?" wrote a British historian, Sir Arthur Bryant, in the wake of the Nigerian civil war. In withdrawing from Nigeria, "our intentions were generous, noble, and completely blameless: it was only our calculations which were at fault. . . ."

It may be that the United States, having understood the virtue of dismantling the monopolies of other nation-states, prompted the European powers to decolonize. But colonial protest led to a crisis of imperial management that could be solved only by the granting of independence.

If no liquidation of empire had been prepared, or even accepted as necessary (much less desirable), by the imperial bureaucracies except as last-minute opportunism, what then was actually transferred when independence nonetheless occurred? In most cases, little of decisive substance was transferred, at least willingly, and least of all in the French tropical dependencies; but the "how much" still evokes interesting variations of reply.

To Boubacar Barry, independence for Senegal meant and has continued to mean its own national sovereignty, but with a continuity of colonialism in the

form of increased dependence and underdevelopment, France and her Common Market partners have retained intact a strict control of the Ivory Coast through an authoritarian regime protected by France. According to this view, the transfer of power in the Ivory Coast has been essentially nominal. Such was not the case with Guinea, where rupture with France was sharp and clear in 1958. Why, one might ask, did the initially popular and progressive regime headed by Sékou Touré degenerate into a murderous tyranny? Here too the crucial variable is the degree of political maturity achieved by the nationalist movement. Even where rupture was more or less complete, as in Guinea, political immaturity could still ruin the future.

Can the mechanism of retreat into autocracy, or something worse, be dismantled for analysis? What, centrally, has gone wrong? Why, aside from natural handicaps or disasters (above all, lately, of severe drought), has Africa entered its present crisis? Where, in the handling of the colonial legacy, have the crucial faults been made? Perhaps the best answer has been provided by David Fieldhouse. His chapter is one of forceful clarity as well as careful detail. His chief conclusions command assent. Politics are urban based. The post-colonial bulk of resources, whether internally or externally derived, has gone into the urban areas, partly for relatively capital-intensive projects of industrial or superstructural investment, partly in support of a continuously growing bureaucracy, or "state class." In other words, where your votes are, there will your heart be also: or, at any rate, your chief expenditures.

The bias against rural communities might have been acceptable for some ten years, while revenues were available from assets, borrowings, and the creaming-off of agricultural surpluses: but thereupon the results, above all in accelerating rural impoverishment, were felt with growing force throughout society as a whole. As farmers became increasingly marginalized within the post-colonial state, but at the same time increasingly exploited, the rural multitudes turned their backs on the "national market" which did them harm rather than good and reverted to "their own" economy, preferring to produce only enough for themselves and their immediate neighbors or else smuggling a surplus across frontiers to others, next door, where the markets were more profitable. Already slashed by long-standing policies of cash-crop production, rural food supplies to the towns and cities and the peri-urban slums continued to diminish. Imports of expensive foreign food, by the same fatal process, continued to expand. Africa, needing productive imports, bought wheat instead. So we have reached the truly fearful situation in which a predominantly agrarian continent can no longer feed itself. Fieldhouse has drawn especial attention to the major example of Nigeria where, over many years, the growth of real income in agriculture was only 0.3 percent. Similar evidence can be provided for Senegal and Guinea. Where, indeed, is the picture essentially different?

Could it have been otherwise? Are there grounds for thinking that an alternative strategy, that of promoting rural development as the basis and precondition for general development, might have been possible in these years after the flags of empire had been hauled down? Was it ever feasible to remove underlying structural problems, notably that of an "unreconstructed peasantry"? Fieldhouse appears to doubt any such feasibility; and generally, I think, the sheer dynamics of "crisis transfer" (given the nature of the "inheritance elites" and of international pressures) put every real alternative out of court. With possibly a few exceptions, such as the former Portuguese colonies, rural impoverishment has seemed to be an unavoidable outcome of the transfer and its consequences.

The delusions nourished by most of the policy makers and policy enforcers were in large degree (at any rate until the late 1960s) the result of a far-reaching ignorance of the realities involved. Perilously little knowledge of economic facts was available to nationalists taking power, or even to Europeans and Americans concerned with marketing their always confident advice. This made it extremely difficult to criticize such advice or to perceive its unwarranted optimism. An inexorable drive toward "takeoff" and its outcome in "high mass consumption" was blithely expected to proceed as day follows night, even at the very time when the actual trend (as has since become most painfully clear) was precisely toward stagnation and regression. But if the grand masters of international expertise could be so thoroughly mistaken, how should African neophytes have known better? And what, from the standpoint of these neophytes, was "better"? After all, the beneficiaries of "urban preference" have often done very well out of rural impoverishment. The continuously widening gap between rich and poor is there to prove as much. Not everyone has suffered a falling income; not everyone is in crisis.

Yet the general crisis remains, and worsens. Various factors explain its gravity: the international structure of division of labor between industrialized and nonindustrialized countries; unsuitable or perverse theories and practices of "development"; but also a third range of factors, those which Fieldhouse has termed "special problems." I myself find this particular emphasis a welcome one. The influence of giving increased emphasis to these special problems—whether of climate, plant disease, or drought—is surely a task on which the historian of Africa, especially of tropical Africa, must concentrate. With the hindsight of many pre-colonial centuries, the major success of Africa's peoples can now be seen as their having discovered how to survive and meet their recurrent needs despite conditions of great, and sometimes exceptional, environmental hostility. Those peoples often solved their special problems with an impressive skill and perseverance; and this, one may even think, has been one of the salient achievements in the progress of mankind. Yet the special problems remained; and if this were true of the past it must also be true

of the present. The advance to more productive communities and structures must always have been difficult, before and after independence, and in nearly all cases. The nature and limits of the transfer of power have maximized the difficulties.

Depressingly little appears to have changed. "The prevailing view of the 1930s," in words of the late Henry Collins years ago, "was that sound principles dictated a division of labor on an international scale, under which some countries should specialize in manufactures and others in primary production." But was this not still the "prevailing view" of the 1960s and 1970s, even the 1980s, to judge by the utter failure of enterprises such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Apart from some shifts of technological level—a few textile mills here and there, some import substitution, a scatter of light industries—no quantity of words or plans or aid donations seems to have made the least real difference. The rich stay rich and the poor stay poor. All that is different from the 1930s in this respect is that the abyss which separates the two has become dizzy and unnerving. As Sam Nolutshungu emphasizes, this phenomenon is especially apparent in southern Africa, where the overall development of the region depends upon the effective withdrawal of colonial or colonial-type power.

A growing impatience with the "easy answers" of past years has blown away familiar bromides and delusions. The reputations of the "inheritance elites" and the "imperial benefactors" have both suffered. Negative judgments, however, can have positive value. Even those peoples who were obliged to destroy the colonial state in the course of fighting for their independence found themselves at once flung into the turmoils of a wider world. In every case the politics of a genuine development remain today at the center of the debate: the lack of systemic change, not merely the "plundered peasantry," was the culprit for "decelerating development"; the means of reconstructing these devastated communities remains a great unanswered question.

Africa has begun, in my own opinion, to produce its own solutions to the victimization of rural majorities. In a few countries there are the beginnings of an experiment in the systemic decentralization of executive power sufficiently advanced to warrant comparative study. There is a world of difference, moral as well as political, between the theory and practice of these experiments and the orthodoxies of the "transfer of power." The latter have put all their coercive weight on the virtues and necessities of "government from the top down": government, that is, essentially from the "city to the village." The former, however limpingly as yet, attempt to reverse the "flow of power": in a real sense, they attempt to reverse, in Crawford Young's words, "the enormously statist policies adopted by the post-colonial state" in the wake and image of colonial dictatorship. Reversing the flow, clearly, is fraught with

difficulty and menaced by administrative perversion, but the rationale rests in a political *nous* far beyond the reach or comprehension of the old orthodoxies.

Although some may think that this interpretation overstates the absence of political sophistication, of political *thought*, in those old orthodoxies and among the authorities who promulgated them, history will in my opinion see the run-up period to independence as a time of abiding misery in all the colonial administrations, as in most of the inheritance elites. Was far more expected of them than they could actually deliver? Perhaps: but the colonial rulers, if not the inheritance elites, invariably made the most confident claims for their monopoly of wisdom. Outside Africa (and often inside Africa as well), these rulers were accordingly expected to have thoroughly studied and understood the politics of transfer and withdrawal: that is to say, the politics of independence in its immediate needs as well as in its potentials. And who else, right up to the end of the colonial period, had access or was allowed or given access to sources of essential information? Who else could command a hundredth part of the means of political judgment available to colonial governors and their nearest henchmen? Yet dismally often, and at times with baffling regularity, they produced no sound judgments, they chose the wrong *interlocuteurs valables*, they failed to see the political ground in front of their noses. Here is another factor that must have its weight when one analyzes the transfer and its consequences.

The colonial rulers could of course advance their own excuse for understanding little or for being mistaken. Their training had been military or administrative. They were obliged to move into the transfer with their eyes closed to the political realities and pressures that were now to engulf them. Consider only Antony Kirk-Greene's recollection of the training given to colonial officials, even at the end of the colonial period. He served in Nigeria, where decolonization was already far advanced. He recalls that "the colonial cadet was seldom if ever taught on his training course how to relate or interact with the representatives of that new phenomenon on the African administrator's horizon of the 1950s, the political party." "Politics" for the average British colonial administrator was something of a dirty word, with "politican" not far removed from "trouble maker." And yet these "trouble makers" were about to become their successors.

And was it any better with the men at the top of the colonial hierarchies of power? On the contrary. With one or two exceptions, the men at the top appear to have had no more notion of the politics of independence than the "man in the street" at home: still less, indeed, since the man in the street at home was at least familiar with the democratic process. Sir John Fletcher-Cooke has recalled traveling with the governor of Tanganyika, Sir Edward Twining, during the 1950s. "During our travels, Twining mentioned in pass-

ing a certain Julius Nyerere, 'a bit of a trouble maker, I think,' he added. He told me that he had let it be known among all his senior officials that he thought it best if they avoided contact with him (Nyerere) as far as possible and did not receive him in their offices. . . ." That was in 1957: four years later, no more than that, senior officials found it necessary to accept this same "trouble maker" as the unchallengeable leader of an independent country.

For men such as those—and they were the men in control, the men with all the information then available—the politics of independence appears to have had little to do with the nation building adumbrated so confidently by Sir Hilton Poynton and the lords of Westminster. In practice, for them the politics of independence was evidently not much more, or sometimes nothing more, than the politics of imperial containment. Whether by training or approach, they could be no more competent to project solutions for an independent Africa, despite all the claims they made for this or that "model," than the armies of advisers who quickly followed in their wake. "If you look at the arguments put forth for the transfer of power," Ronald Robinson has stated, "half the argument was that this will prolong the Empire. The other half was that it will lead to constructive rebuilding. All the steps towards granting African independence were in fact all steps argued for in private and taken on the ground that it was essential to do this to prolong colonial rule."

Here is a dimension, in other words, where the politics of the transfer has been wrapped not only in the ponderous and complacent prose of orthodoxy and convention but, still more confusingly, in the masks and veils of double-talk and contradictory aims. Yet it is scarcely a dimension that departed with the colonial rulers, for the inheritance elites of one kind or another were quick to show themselves well able to appreciate its benefits for those in government.

What emerges clearly from this book is that the "mythologies" or "orthodoxies" of decolonization must be dispelled. The clarity of thought suggests that Africa will find its own solutions.

22. *Anglophone Africa and the Transfers of Power: Bibliography*

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This bibliographical essay complements its predecessor, "A Historical Perspective on the Transfer of Power in British Colonial Africa" in *The Transfer of Power in Africa*, edited by Professor Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis (1982), in that it takes account of general studies of the decolonization of Africa published since about 1980. It presents a critical country-by-country bibliography of works relating to the transfer of power in some twenty anglophone African territories, arranged alphabetically within five anglophone regions. As a guideline, I have sought to limit the entries to those that directly relate to the origins and consequences of the transfer of power in Africa over roughly the forty years following World War II.

GENERAL

The progressive opening up of government documents in the Public Record Office in accordance with the thirty-year rule has resulted in continuing attention to the study of decolonization. One simple but telling illustration of the impact of this source on research and the literature over the past decade will suffice: the exhaustive bibliography that comprised volume 5 (1973) of the Hoover Institution's milestone *Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960*, edited by L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, contained twenty-five hundred entries, of which only one was classified as "Decolonization" (in French, on Ruanda-Urundi), and even the latest volume, Yvette Scheven's *Bibliographies for African Studies* (1984), surprisingly records only two titles for the theme of the transfer of power.

The listing in the present volume has over fifty named items on decoloniza-

tion and the transfer of power. The emphasis has largely focused on research and writing from the metropolitan end. The transfer of power has not yet attracted as much interest from African scholars as earlier events in the colonial calendar. Nonetheless, as the silver jubilee of "African independence" virtually coincides with the centenary of the seminal event of the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884 (see A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, "Centennial 1984: A Second Scramble for Africa?" *Contemporary Review* [1983]; Anthony Asiwaju, "The Berlin Conference: Whose Celebration Is It?" *West Africa* (1984)), an assessment of the first twenty-five years of post-colonial Africa by African scholars as well as their non-African colleagues is now well under way (see J. F. A. Ajayi, "Expectations of Independence," *Daedalus* [1982]; Douglas Anglin, "Independent Black Africa: Retrospect and Prospect," *International Journal* [1984]; and the retrospective collection of essays in *African Independence: The First Twenty-Five Years*, edited by Gwendolen Carter and Patrick O'Meara [1985], and *Politics and Government in African States, 1960–1985*, edited by Peter Duignan and Robert Jackson [1986]).

Perhaps the three most substantial contributions to the study of the transfer of power since my previous essay have been the publication of D. J. Morgan's five volumes of *The Official History of Colonial Development* (1980); volume 8 of the *Cambridge History of Africa*, covering the years 1940–1975 (1984); and, to change the medium for a moment, Granada Television's thirteen-part *End of Empire* documentary (1985). For the compilation of the first, Morgan was granted privileged access to certain Cabinet papers. His survey, however, including the very relevant volume 5, *Guidance towards Self-Government in British Colonies, 1941–1971*, omits a number of documents that are generally held to be of significance in the African context, for instance the Caine-Cohen Report (see R. E. Robinson, "Andrew Cohen and the Transfer of Power in Tropical Africa, 1941–1951" in *Decolonisation and After: The British and French Experience*, edited by W. H. Morris-Jones and Georges Fischer [1980]). Mandatory reviews of the important Morgan volumes are those by D. K. Fieldhouse in the *English Historical Review* 97 (1982): 386–95, and by R. E. Robinson in the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12 (1983): 132–35. For the Granada Television landmark, although Brian Lapping has written a full-length supporting narrative under the same title, *End of Empire* (1985), the ultimate and unique value of the subject to future historians lies principally in the many hours of oral-history interviews recorded with nationalist leaders and colonial officials alike for the programs on the Gold Coast, Kenya, the Central African Federation, and Rhodesia.

Other publications since 1980 include a second edition (1982) of Rudolf von Albertini's *Decolonization* (1971); it contains no fresh material, but in a new introduction the author briefly surveys some of the work published in the

1970s. His subsequent *European Colonial Rule: The Impact of the West on India, South East Asia and Africa, 1880–1940* (1982) carries a final chapter entitled “A Summing Up: Reflections on Colonialism.” Of far greater impact, if not central to the tropical-African experience, is the second volume of Wm. Roger Louis’s superlative study of decolonization, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945–1951* (1984). Louis has also published an article, “American anti-Colonialism and the Dissolution of the British Empire” in *International Affairs* 61 (1985): 395–420. J. A. Gallagher’s Ford lectures of 1974 have since been published, under the title of *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire* (1982), (to be read with J. D. Hargreaves’s review in the *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 16 [1982]: 728–29), and the revision of Robert Pearce’s important thesis (Oxford, 1978) has appeared as *The Turning Point in Africa: British Colonial Policy, 1938–1948* (1982). Raymond F. Betts’s survey of Western overseas empires in the twentieth century, *Uncertain Dimensions* (1985), which is designed as more of a cultural history than a political narrative, closes with an essay on decolonization. Two noteworthy undergraduate-level texts have been published recently, R. F. Holland’s *European Decolonization, 1918–1981: An Introductory Survey*, in the Macmillan series Themes in Comparative History (1985), and M. E. Chamberlain’s shorter *The Fall of the European Empires* (1985). Both deal with the transfer of power in Asia as well as Africa and Holland’s survey has a lot to offer to a wider audience.

A major critique is the article by John Flint, “Planned Decolonization and Its Failure in British Africa,” *African Affairs* 82 (1983): 389–411, in which he attributes the dynamic change squarely to Colonial Office initiative and not to African impulses. Alongside should be read Robert Pearce’s follow-up article, “The Colonial Office and Planned Decolonization in Africa,” *African Affairs* 83 (1984): 77–93, where he argues that, given Britain’s economic postwar weakness that could not even handle an informal empire, the Colonial Office strategy of planned decolonization set out to divert nationalist energies from negative opposition to the colonial power and redirect them into constructive, developmental channels of nation building. Both of these are thematically linked with J. W. Cell’s article, “On the Eve of Decolonization: The Colonial Office’s Plans for the Transfer of Power in Africa,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 8 (1980): 235–257 and R. D. Pearce’s riposte, “The Colonial Office Office in 1947 and the Transfer of Power in Africa,” *ibid.* 10 (1982): 211–15. All four articles are challenged on their down-playing of the role of what Michael Twaddle specifies as “anti-colonial nationalism” in his thoughtful overview paper presented to the twenty-first annual conference of the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom, “Decolonization in British Africa: A New Historiographical Debate?” A special issue of the *Jour-*

nal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 12 (1984), edited by R. F. Holland and S. A. G. Rizvi, was devoted to "Perspectives on Imperialism and Decolonization." Among the articles relevant to this essay one should note R. F. Holland's "The Imperial Factor on British Strategies from Attlee to Mac-Millan, 1945-63" and J. G. Darwin's "British Decolonization Since 1945: A Pattern or a Puzzle?" Again, the contributions to this special issue have been separately included in the bibliography that follows.

Few modern studies of the last days of empire or the first years of African independence would today be written without respective epilogue or prologue. Thus, there is a firm focus on the policy, process, and outcome of the transfer of power in the last two chapters, "Moving Quickly: 1939-1970" and "A Sudden Shift: 1970-1983," of the revised edition of Bernard Porter's short history of British imperialism, *The Lion's Share* (1984); the final pages of such contemporary studies as V. G. Kiernan, *From Conquest to Collapse: European Empires, 1815-1960* (1982), D. K. Fieldhouse, *Colonialism, 1870-1945: An Introduction* (1981) (which despite its title surveys the period up to 1980), A. P. Thornton, *For the File on Empire* (1968), and Ali Mazrui and Michael Tidy, *Nationalism and the New States in Africa* (1984); and the opening pages of Martin Meredith, *The First Dance of Freedom: Black Africa in the Postwar Era* (1984), and Peter Duignan and Lewis H. Gann, *The United States and Africa: A History* (1984). The U.N. teaching guide, *United Nations and Decolonization* (1984), is of interest less for its contents than for the furor that its first version (subsequently withdrawn for revision) aroused among some of the former colonial powers. Finally, two small points can be made at this level. Robert Blake's *The Decline of Power, 1915-1964* (1985) promises to be a forceful descriptive companion to Correlli Barnett's analytical and controversial *The Collapse of British Power* (1972). On the Commonwealth, see two new works, *The Commonwealth in the 1980s: Challenges and Opportunities* (1984), edited by A. J. R. Groom, and Robin W. Wink's chapter, "Problem Child of British History: The British Empire-Commonwealth," in *Recent Views on British History*, edited by Richard Schlatter (1984). One of the few case studies of the involvement and reactions of the commercial sector to the decision to transfer power in Africa is J. E. Milburn, *British Business and Ghanaian Independence* (1977).

With regard to the public view from the metropole, parliamentary proceedings in *Hansard* remain an indispensable archive. Debates in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords on, say, the Independence Bill for individual African territories are primary sources for studying the Westminster view on the transfer of power. So, on occasion, can be the debate on some subsequent major national event, for example, the civil war in Nigeria or the Amin catastrophe in Uganda. Nor should the researcher overlook the no less

prime source of the debates on independence in the African parliaments themselves, for example, the Gold Coast's "Motion of Density" debate in 1957. An official publication that tends to be overlooked is the demi-official quarterly *Commonwealth Challenge*, especially the issues on "The Transfer of Power" (8, 3, 1960) and "Decolonization" (13, 1, 1964). Three unusually interesting official pamphlets are: the booklet put out by the Empire Information Service during the war and published under the imprimatur of HMSO, *Origins and Purpose* (1944); *Towards Self-Government in the British Colonies* (1947), issued by the British Information Services in New York (ID 598); and, as it were, its sequel, *Britain and the Process of Decolonization* (1970), issued by the U.K. Central Office of Information (Res. Pamphlet 91).

Pending the opening of the official files in the Public Record Office or in the respective National Archives, a useful stopgap (and on occasion a contribution of lasting value, always within the context of *caveat lector*), can be the memoirs and recollections of those involved in the transfer of power—metropolitan statesmen, nationalist leaders, civil servants from both home and territorial governments, freedom fighters, insider journalists. In respect of the *dramatis personae* at the London end, volumes 4–6, covering the years 1956–1963, of Harold Macmillan's memoirs are revealing. Anthony Eden, during whose tenure at Number Ten the Suez crisis occurred, Alec Douglas-Home, who was prime minister during the break-up of the Central African Federation, and Harold Wilson, whose term of office coincided with much of the UDI period in Rhodesia, have all published autobiographies, respectively *Full Circle* (1960), *The Way the Wind Blows* (1976), and *The Labour Government 1964–1970: A Personal Record* (1971). Among secretaries of state for the colonies closely involved with the decolonization of Africa, there is a biography of Iain Macleod (1959–1961) by Nigel Fisher (1973) and memoirs from Oliver Lyttelton (1951–1954; 1962) and Reginald Maudling (1961–1962; 1978). The Arthur Creech Jones (1946–1950) papers are in Rhodes House Library and the Malcolm Macdonald (1938–1940) papers have now been catalogued for deposit in the Durham University Library. Both form substantial collections. There is as yet no sign of any archive of the personal papers of Alan Lennox-Boyd (1954–1959), though the Royal Commonwealth Society holds a useful collection of some of his articles and addresses. A unique collection of tapes and transcripts covering twelve hours of interviews with Lord Boyd is under embargo in Rhodes House Library. For R. A. Butler, who was minister in charge of the special Central African Office from 1962 to 1963, see his memoir, *The Art of the Possible* (1971). The latest volume of the history of *The Times*, *Struggles in War and Peace* (1984), covers the critical African years of 1939 to 1966. A good case can be made for paying close attention, too, to the memoirs of politicians in Washington, for example, the public and

private papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Dwight D. Eisenhower, and of such officials as Dean Acheson, Henry Kissinger, and Andrew Young, as well as the major primary sources of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* and the *Department of State Bulletin*.

Among Colonial Service governors who presented unpublished accounts of their stewardship to the Royal African Society are Arden-Clarke (Gold Coast), Twining (Tanganyika), and Hall (Somaliland). At the lower echelons, views from the field officers of the Colonial Service (and their wives) on the transfer of power are usefully recorded, often verbatim, in the concluding chapters, "Winds of Change" and "The Flags Come Down," of Charles Allen's *Tales from the Dark Continent* (1979), a presentation derived from the far longer (and unpublished) BBC Radio 4 interviews. The woman's view of empire and decolonization is also the basis of the interviews in Joan Alexander's *Voices and Echoes: Tales from Colonial Women* (1983), Rosemary Kenrick's *Sudan Tales* (1987), and Helen Callaway's *Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (1987). From Whitehall, Lord Garner's *The Commonwealth Office, 1925–1968* (1978), contains a chapter on the progressive mergers and final closure of the Colonial Office during 1966–1968, while Sir Charles Jeffries's post-retirement memoir, *Whitehall and the Colonial Service: An Administrative Memoir 1939–1956* (1972)—far more valuable than his in-harness *The Transfer of Power* (1960)—provides an influential insider's perspective on the complex and frequently stillborn plans for the redeployment of members of the Colonial Service whose careers were prematurely terminated by independence. Sir Ralph Furse's autobiography, *Aucuparius* (1962), and Robert Heussler's *Yesterday's Rulers* (1963) both discuss the Whitehall new-look of a postwar Colonial Service. *The Transfer of Power: The Colonial Administrator in the Age of Decolonization* (1979), edited by A. H. M. Kirk-Green, contains two personal and revealing views of decolonization from top officials, Sir Hilton Poynton, who was the last permanent under secretary of state in the Colonial Office (1959–1966), and Sir Leslie Monson, who was in charge of the East and Central African Department of the Colonial Office (1959–1964). There is much to be gleaned about the role of the most influential Colonial Office academic confidante during the crucial years of 1940–1970, Dame Margery Perham (whose voluminous papers are now in Rhodes House Library), in the chapter in *Oxford and the Idea of Commonwealth*, edited by Frederick Madden and D. K. Fieldhouse (1982), as well as in her collected views on decolonization, *Colonial Sequence II: A Chronological Commentary upon British Colonial Policy in Africa* (1970), supplementing her BBC Reith lectures, subsequently published as *The Colonial Reckoning* (1961). Relevant, too, are J. M. Lee's successor to his important *Colonial Development and Good Government: Study of the Idea Expressed by the*

British Official Classes in Planning Decolonization 1939–1964 (1967), written with M. Petter (1982), *The Colonial Office, War and Development Policy*, and D. K. Fieldhouse's chapter, "The Labour Governments and the Empire—Commonwealth, 1945–1951" in *The Foreign Policy of the Labour Governments, 1945–1951*, edited by R. Ovendale (1984). This group is completed by the companion volumes of David Goldsworthy's informative *Colonial Issues in British Politics, 1945–1961* (1971), P. S. Gupta's stimulating *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914–1964* (1975), and S. A. H. Haqqi's *The Colonial Policy of the Labour Government, 1945–1951* (1960). To these can now be added Stephen J. Howe, "The Left and the End of Empire, 1939–1964" (unpublished D. Phil. thesis, Oxford 1985).

Among the nationalist leaders in the transfer of power we now have the autobiographies of Abel Muzorewa (1980) and Joshua Nkomo (1984); Siaka Stevens (1984); John Cartwright's portrait of Stevens's predecessors, the two Margais, in his *Political Leadership in Sierra Leone* (1978); and the collected speeches of Robert Mugabe and of Seretse Khama, *From the Front Line* (1980). Sir Roy Welensky has followed up his *4,000 Days* (1964) by allowing J. R. T. Wood to present a substantial selection from his personal archive, *The Welensky Papers* (1983). As for freedom fighters, we may expect a steady development of such primary material as David Caute, *Under the Skin* (1983), and Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* (1986). From Namibia, there is John Ya-Otto's autobiography, *Battlefront Namibia* (1982).

UNPUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

It is convenient here to classify these under three headings: (a) archives, (b) others, (c) research in progress.

Archives. The Public Record Office at Kew, London, is so critical to any study of Britain's decolonization of Africa that were it not for two considerations it would be otiose to mention it. One, scholars are still in the "prelude period" of the transfer of power in Africa so far as official papers are concerned: even the pathfinding Sudan story cannot be fully studied (in PRO terms) until 1987. Two, and following from this, it will be the mid-1990s before the Cabinet papers and other departmental records on the demise of the Central African Federation can be made available, and well into the next century before the documents on Zimbabwe's turning point of the Lancaster House negotiations or on Britain's role as one of the five delegated nations in the inching transfer of power in Namibia will—if then—be made accessible to

researchers. The signs are that research into the decolonization of Africa is going to rest squarely on the files in the Public Record Office for at least a full generation of scholarship to come.

Fortunately, a substantial and significant part of this inescapable lack of contemporary insight into the modalities and mechanics of the transfer of power may be filled in from the compensatory collections of the private papers of those involved, both at the center and on the often no less revealing periphery of decolonization: politicians (British and African alike) and colonial governors, pressure groups and individual lobbyists (those against as well as in favor of the liquidation of the British Empire), Colonial Office officials with bird's-eye perceptions and colonial service officers with their worm's-eye view, even security men, guerrillas and agents provocateurs, all members of the cast who appeared in the final act of African empire. Here, a unique repository, albeit inevitably of inconsistent importance and calling for discriminating scrutiny and interpretation, are the papers, diaries, memoirs, minutes, letters, photographs, and ephemeral printed material emanating from territorial governments, which have over the past two decades been deliberately collected for Rhodes House Library, Oxford. With thousands of items already open (a few remain under fixed-date embargoes), a short note on the origins and content of this unparalleled archive is in order.

The bulk of the material derives from three consecutive retrieval projects. From 1963–1972 the Oxford Colonial Records Project (OCRPs) approached several thousand former members of Her Majesty's overseas civil service with an invitation to deposit any personal documentation they might have relating to their work in the colonial dependencies. This rescue operation was described by J. J. Tawney, its director, in an article in *African Affairs* (1968) and by Patricia Pugh, one of its archivists, in the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* (1968), and the principal acquisitions were listed, along with other relevant manuscript material deposited during the same period, in the three Rhodes House Library checklists compiled by Louis Frewer (1968, 1971) and Wendy Byrne (1978). Complementary specialist collections of similar manuscripts have been made on the Sudan and the Middle East, respectively described by E. S. B. Corry and L. E. Forbes in *Africa Research and Documentation* 31 (1983): 1–11, and by Diana Grimwood-Jones in the *Catalogue of the Private Papers Collection in the Middle-East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford* (1979). See also Grimwood-Jones's descriptive article in the *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin* 5 (1978): 113–33, along with Gillian Grant's descriptive article (*ibid.* 11 [1984]: 58–62) and her microfiche catalogue, *Historical Photographs of the Middle East*, also held at St Antony's (1985). Inevitably, in British personnel terms, there is some spillover from the Middle East to Africa.

In 1978, a successor scheme was inaugurated, the Oxford Development Records Project (ODRP). In its archival collecting work, three fresh directions were followed. The first was to widen the catchment area from colonial-service personnel to all those expatriates who had had overseas experience, including the private sector. Second, the timescale could now, nearly two decades later, opportunely be extended to cover both sides of the years of independence. And third, specifically focused recollection and retrieval projects were instituted, for example, a multidisciplinary project on the transfer of power in Nyasaland, Africanization and public-service training, and the establishment of universities and medical schools in latter-day colonial Africa. A brief account of the scope of the ODRP can be found in the piece by Alan Bell and Ingrid Thomas, "Africa in Oxford" (*Times Literary Supplement*, 14 October 1983), and, with special reference to the African material, in a substantial article by the director (A. H. M. Kirk-Greene) in *African Research and Documentation*, 33 (1983): 1–11. Twenty-one bio-bibliographical ODRP project reports are now available to researchers visiting Rhodes House Library. A supplement to the Rhodes House Library checklists, edited by Penelope Tolmey and including all the manuscript material collected under the auspices of the ODRP (1978–1984) is due for publication in 1987. With the winding up of the ODRP, the acquisition of colonial papers continues within Rhodes House Library as the Oxford Colonial Archives Project (OCAP).

To round off the discussion of this particular aspect of archives in Britain, a brief reference to a few of the OCRP/ODRP papers unambiguously relevant to the theme of this bibliographical essay may be useful (these are not all necessarily open at the time of writing). There are, for instance, tape-recorded interviews with Iain Macleod and Alan Lennox-Boyd; papers belonging to Sir William Battershill, Sir Gawain Bell, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, Sir Walter Coutts, Sir Arthur Richards, and Sir Percy Wyn-Harris, all holders of African governorships during the terminal period covered by the present volume; and, in addition to the topic-focused retrieval projects discussed above, documentation relating to the process of the transfer of power in other African territories, as well as to the work of the Overseas Services Resettlement Board—the reverse side, as it were, of the civil services' localization coin.

The OCRP/ODRP/OCAP at Oxford and the Sudan Archive at Durham are not the sole repositories in Britain of important papers relating to the transfer of power. For example, a rich archive is the Malcolm Macdonald papers in the Durham University Library; the Royal Commonwealth Society Library has a wide range of manuscripts and an outstanding photograph collection, whose catalogue by John Falconer has recently been made available (see his article on the RCS collection in *African Research and Documentation* 31 [1983]: 12–19); the Imperial War Museum has a number of tape-recorded interviews and

holds a full set of the tapes and transcripts from which the BBC Radio oral-history program "Tales of the Dark Continent" was abridged, although no classified analysis of the text has yet been undertaken to match its catalogue of the companion "Plain Tales from the Raj" corpus compiled by Laura Kamel and Peter Hart (1981). The IWM also recently published a catalogue of its "Colonial Forces in Africa" tape recordings, including those deposited in Oxford. A probably unique archive may be anticipated from the extensive interviews made by Granada TV in connection with their four-part documentary on the transfer of power in Africa; the National Library of Scotland has acquired the extensive papers of the late Professor John P. Mackintosh, among them the typescript of a lecture on the Labour party and decolonization; the Swinton papers, among which is correspondence with Sir Arthur Richards, are preserved in Churchill College, Cambridge; the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of London holds the unpublished typescript of the four-volume draft history of the Colonial Office in the Second World War written by Sir John Shuckburgh; and the Bodleian Library holds the papers of such *dramatis personae* of decolonization as Sir Michael Blundell, Sir Roy Welensky, and Arthur Creech Jones, and of others closely involved, like the Reverend Michael Scott, Dame Margery Perham, and Sir John Tilney, M.P.

Finally, in the archival context, there are the local archives in Africa itself. For a number of reasons access is frequently more of a hit-or-miss experience than in the case of metropolitan archives. Yet it is often the case that what local archives, faced by all sorts of difficulties unimaginable in London, lack in organization can be more than made up for by the quality of documentation often unexpected, unrestricted, or even unavailable elsewhere. It remains to be seen, as the thirty-year rule catches up with the high noon of decolonization, whether the local or the metropolitan governments will look the more kindly on access to official files. Among Africa's own relevant documentation, one may note, for example, the intense interest in the initial Mau Mau papers generated in Nairobi following their opening in the PRO in 1984, and the existence (if indeed ever much more) of the files of the Nigerian political parties that dominated the decolonizing decade, impounded by the federal military government in 1966. Meanwhile, the reported private ownership of the unpublished diaries of such a leading nationalist figure as Aminu Kano, like the personal papers of his co-nationalist Alhaji Adelabu earlier acquired by K. Post and G. Jenkins (see their *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria* [1973]), and the recent release of Abubakar Imam's significant interview with Lord Lugard in 1943 on how the northern Nigerians looked at the country's political problems, will lead the eager researcher to reflect on what other rarity of the nationalist period he may next

uncover. To complement the African oral-history programs associated with the Maji Maji (University of Dar es Salaam) and the Mau Mau (University of Nairobi) research projects in the 1960s, the National Archives of Zimbabwe have initiated an oral-history project to record the experiences of those who took part in the liberation struggle and Chimurenga war. Much more remains to be done in the field of contemporary oral history in Africa.

Others. Here we draw attention to what can be the ephemera of seminar or conference papers. Sometimes, of course, these are born again as articles or chapters. Relevant instances of this kind of source in an as yet unpublished form include N. J. Westcott's paper on "The Politics of Planning and the Planning of Politics: Colonialism and Development in British Africa, 1930–1960" given to the Development Studies Association (1981), as well as another on "Sterling and Empire, 1939–1951"; the papers presented to the conference on decolonization held at Australian National University, Canberra, in 1982, of which only that by John Flint has as yet appeared in print (*African Affairs*, 1983); several papers presented to the *Past and Present* conference held at Oxford in July 1982; the proceedings of the conference on the Condominium period in the Sudan held at the University of Durham in 1982, where the panel on the transfer of power produced significant papers from officials involved in Khartoum; a number of the papers written for the conference on Africa and the Second World War held at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies in 1984; and the papers given before panels of such annual African Studies Association conferences as those of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, for example, those, to take the most recent conference alone (ASAUK, York, 1984), by M. Twaddle, R. Crook, T. E. Ranger, and R. Rathbone on the historiography of decolonization.

Research in Progress. The annual mimeographed listing entitled *Theses in Progress in Commonwealth Studies*, completed cumulatively by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, provides an indispensable complement to the somewhat delayed *Theses in Africa Accepted by Universities in the United Kingdom and Ireland*, sponsored by the Standing Committee for Library Materials on Africa, the latest volume (1978) covering only up to 1976. *African Research and Documentation* now usefully separates theses recently completed from those still in progress. Many titles in both reference guides incorporate one aspect or another of the transfer of power or else generally relate to the decolonizing years. Relevant topics are also to be found in the biennial *Register of Research in the United Kingdom* put out by the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. In the United States of America, to the well-established annual listing in *Dissertation Abstracts International* should be added *U.S. Doctoral Dissertations in Third World*

Studies, 1869–1978, compiled by Michael Sims (1980). In this context, it should be noted that the Leiden Center for the Study of European Expansion from time to time devotes a whole issue of its journal, *Itinerario*, to an annotated bibliography of expansion studies, including Africa; volume 6 (1982), 3/4, contains nearly three thousand entries.

The postdoctoral work in progress on two aspects of the transfer of power in Africa includes the general process, nature, and consequence of decolonization, and the specific work on the biographies of principal dramatis personae. Of unusual interest is Robert L. Tignor's ongoing research into multinational corporations and decolonization in Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya. Max Beloff's second volume in his planned trilogy, *Imperial Sunset*, the first volume of which (1969) took the story up to Britain's liberal empire of 1921, is to be entitled *Dream of Commonwealth*. The publication of K. E. Robinson's Callender lectures given in the University of Aberdeen in 1982 is still awaited. Work on the volumes on East and West Africa in Oceana's series on the constitutional instruments of the transfer of power, *From Dependence to Statehood in Commonwealth Africa*, edited by H. H. Marshall, has been halted by the compiler's death, but there is already much sound, basic material in the first two volumes, on southern (1980) and central Africa (1982). Audio-Learning has recorded on cassette a discussion between Lord Beloff and the present writer comparing the demission of power in India with the African experience. In progress are biographical studies of such leading actors on the decolonization scene as Ahmadu Bello (J. N. Paden), Sir Bernard Bourdillon (R. D. Pearce), Lord Boyd (D. Dilkes), Sir Andrew Cohen (R. E. Robinson), Sir Geoffrey Colby (C. A. Baker), Malcolm Macdonald (Clyde Sanger, Peter Lyon, Mary Turnbull), Sir Philip Mitchell (D. Throup, R. A. Frost), Sir Arthur Richards (R. L. Peel), and Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (A. T. Clarke). Together these will complement the recent but not necessarily definitive studies of their peers, such as Erica Powell on Kwame Nkrumah (1984), D. Rooney on Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (1982), D. Goldsworthy on Tom Mboya (1982), and the memoirs of such latter-day proconsuls as Sir Bryan Sharwood Smith (1969), Sir Rex Niven (1982), and Sir Gawain Bell (1983). Nor should it be overlooked that British actors in the transfer of power in Africa are, in the 1980s and ineluctably more so in the 1990s, more and more likely to appear in the *Dictionary of National Biography*: the entries there are as authoritative as they are indispensable to the researcher. Several African countries, such as Nigeria, South Africa, and Ghana are now actively working on their own dictionaries of national biography.

The eventual influence and aftermath of the colonial legacy is a theme that has already divided scholarship into two camps; and there, along with the discussion in the preceding chapters, we may for the moment leave the

opposing forces drawn up, marshaled on the Left by such generals as Walter Rodney, Bade Onimode, E. Madunagu, D. Wadada Nabudere, and the latest, Basil Davidson (1982) and Ali Mazrui (1986) in their controversial television presentations on Africa, against those on the Right set on the march by L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan in their *Burden of Empire* (1968), by Peter Bauer in his article "The Economics of Resentment," *Journal of Contemporary History* (1969): 51–69, and, the latest, Peter Bauer and Basil Yamey in their article challenging the stereotype of colonial Africa, "Black Africa: The Living Legacy of Dying Colonialism," *Encounter* (February 1984): 55–61. But this grand theme of the imperial legacy also has a strong metropolitan side to it. Scholars of decolonization can be expected to turn their inquiries soon to the impact of the transfer of power specifically on the economic, social, and political state of each of the ex-colonial powers and, more generally, of Western Europe as a whole. M. Kahler's *Decolonization in Britain and France: The Domestic Consequences of International Relations* (1984) takes the theme a step forward.

A final reflection. The historical transfer of power in India can now, forty years after the event, point to an unrivaled academic monument in the twelve documentary volumes edited by Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, a starting point for all subsequent scholarship on the ultimate years of imperial demission (for a useful review of the making of the series, see the article by L. J. Carter in *Modern Asian Studies*, forthcoming). To this achievement, the first volume on the transfer of power in Burma has been added (1983), with a second to come, both edited by Hugh Tinker (for important commentary, see Hugh Tinker, "Burma: Power Transferred or Exacted?" in the India Office Library and Records *Report for 1983–1984*, 7–13, and the review article by Louis Allen in the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 13 [1985]: 185–94). Yet no such original and authoritative sourcebook exists for anglophone Africa. Is it not time it did?*

* Following this call made at the Harare conference in January 1985, a committee to look into the viability of such a proposal was set up on the initiative of Anthony Low, with the title "British Documents on the End of Empire Project." It will be directed by Michael Crowder.

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23. *Decolonization in French, Belgian, Portuguese, and Italian Africa: Bibliography*

DAVID E. GARDINIER

This bibliography includes works in western languages published mainly since 1974 that contribute to an understanding of decolonization in French, Belgian, Portuguese, and Italian Africa.¹ It continues and complements the bibliographical essays and bibliographies in *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (1971) and *Transfer of Power in Africa: Decolonization, 1940–1960* (1982). Researchers should consult these works in order to secure the essential older references to the subject. For older works on the Italian territories that achieved independence they may refer to the bibliographies in Lorna Hahn, *Historical Dictionary of Libya* (1979), John Wright, *Libya: a Modern History* (1982), Fabio Carboni, *Bibliografica somala* (1983), and Mohamed Khalif Salad, *Somalia: A Bibliographical Survey* (1977).²

The term *decolonization* has been widely used since the 1950s to describe the emancipation of Asia and Africa from foreign control. Decolonization may be defined in a narrow sense as the process by which Asians and Africans gained self-government and independence from their colonial rulers. Involved in this mainly political process were African reactions and responses to

1. The research for this bibliography was aided by a grant from the African Studies Program of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

2. The former Italian territory of Eritrea, which was annexed to neighboring Ethiopia, is not included in this bibliography. Works on the end of Italian rule there may be found in the last volume of the *Cambridge History of Africa* (1984) and in the Research and Information Center on Eritrea, *Bibliography on Eritrea* (Rome, 1982), which contains more than three thousand entries.

For Spanish Africa, which is also not included, one may consult Lynn F. Sipe, *Western Sahara: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (1985), William Spencer, *Historical Dictionary of Morocco* (1980), and Max Liniger-Goumaz, *Historical Dictionary of Equatorial Guinea* (1979).

colonial rule, which led to anti-colonialist and nationalist movements, as well as to outside pressures (that is, elsewhere in Africa, in other colonial empires, and in the international political system, including the United Nations) that had an impact on the course of developments in colonial lands. These external elements helped to form the larger context within which the transfer of power took place.

Decolonization may also be broadly defined as the process by which Africans and Asians remove all vestiges of external control at the economic, cultural, and psychological levels as well as at the political level. In this wider sense, they acquire more of the powers to make the decisions that affect their lives and allow them to be authentically themselves.

This bibliography gives much greater attention than did the previous ones to the literature on decolonization in the broad sense of the term. It contains, in particular, the extensive writings on three topics: the post-independence relations of the African states with their former colonial rulers, and with the latter's allies and Common Market partners; the attempts of the various African states to reorganize and restructure their societies and external relations; and the involvement of foreign powers other than the former colonial rulers in their affairs. Above all, the bibliography contains not only the recent writings on the origins and course of decolonization leading to political independence but also those on the aftermath or consequences of independence.

The bibliography is organized into geographical categories, most of them individual countries, so that researchers may readily identify the works published on a particular state. Because a good deal of the significant research deals with groups of countries and general themes, larger geographical categories and thematic categories have also been established. Most of the bibliographies that are not continuing sources and that contain materials on decolonization as well as archival guides have been integrated into the appropriate categories. A few of the most important are also discussed below. Where contents of writings are not obvious from their titles, brief annotations have been provided.

This introduction is not intended to serve as a bibliographical essay. But it discusses three topics which may prove useful to researchers: some trends in the literature published since 1974, including the kinds of sources employed; other research in progress on decolonization; bibliographies and continuing sources.

RECENT TRENDS

French, Belgian, and Italian Africa achieved political independence in roughly the same period as most of British Africa. But the study of decolonization in British Africa is much advanced by comparison because the British

(and American) archives have been promptly made available to researchers after thirty years. France, despite a similar thirty-year rule, began to release the archives concerning some black-African countries for the 1940s and the early 1950s only at the end of the 1970s and in the early 1980s. Thus the bulk of the research on decolonization and transfer of power in French Africa until recently tended to be influenced by new perspectives rather than new sources. Sometimes these studies utilized materials neglected earlier, political ephemera not previously available or the *témoignages* of participants now willing to relate more openly their experiences and observations. But far more often they reflected the issues and concerns that had emerged during the 1960s and 1970s.

Let us take a few examples of these tendencies. Essays in *Decolonisation and After* (1980), edited by W. H. Morris-Jones and Georges Fischer, compared the British and French experiences in the light of developments since independence. Whereas a few of the essays on British territories re-examined decolonization in the 1940s and early 1950s on the basis of the newly opened London archives, no French counterparts were possible. In 1979 Père Joseph-Roger de Benoist, who had served during the 1940s and 1950s as editor of *Afrique nouvelle*, a Dakar weekly sympathetic to African advancement, published *La balkanisation de l'A.O.F.* This study provided a much clearer and more nuanced account of the French and African politics that led to the breakup of the federation and the failure to regroup its components. Though the author carefully reviewed the published sources and a wide range of political ephemera, it was his own observations and contacts with the participants that contributed most to a more accurate narrative and more refined conclusions. In 1982 Laurent Gbagbo, an Ivoirian scholar, published *La Côte d'Ivoire, économie et société à la veille de l'indépendance*, in which he employed records from the Ivoirian Chamber of Commerce and national archives for the war years to reinterpret the origins of the present ruling group headed by President Félix Houphouët-Boigny and its role in the process of decolonization. Gbagbo did not use the metropolitan archives, so that the major part of his analysis rests not on new sources but on new interpretations of older ones.

Marc Michel, in his essay on French Togoland in the present volume, may be the first scholar to employ both the French and British archives for the study of decolonization in a French black-African territory. Michel and other scholars who presented papers at the conference "Les Prodrômes de la Décolonisation de l'Empire Français (1936–1956)" in Paris in December 1984³ are undertaking for the French Empire and Union what scholars of the British

3. Papers from the conference have been published under the title, *Les chemins de la décolonisation de l'empire français*. Paris, 1986.

Empire and Commonwealth have already been doing for a decade on the basis of the newly opened British and American archives. It is therefore possible that older interpretations of decolonization in French Africa will be refined, modified, and perhaps revised as researchers make use of newly opened archives. Whether the revisions will be as important as those produced concerning the British Empire by Wm. Roger Louis, Robert Pearce, John Flint, and John Hargreaves, to take the best-known examples, remains to be seen.

Scholars of Belgian Africa have been slower to re-examine the decolonization of their territories that led to independence. Until 1983 Belgium maintained a fifty-year rule, which had the effect of keeping the archives of that period closed to scholars.⁴ The matters that have occupied their attention until recently have concerned the turbulent post-independence period with the secession of the Katanga, the intervention of the United Nations, and the involvement of other foreign powers, all of which contribute to the context from which the Mobutu dictatorship arose.

The publication of the monumental study *Le Congo Belge durant la seconde guerre mondiale* (1983) under the auspices of the Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer indicates that a serious re-examination of the origins of decolonization has now begun. The sixteen essays, by scholars and former officials, show the profound impact of the conflict on African societies and the fundamental changes, especially concerning economic priorities and organization, social formations, and foreign relations. Most of the essays involve more of a rethinking than a use of new sources. But those having the most significance are the ones by J.-C. Willame, Léon de Saint-Moulin, and Gaëtan Feltz, which were based upon newly available materials. These authors drew upon, respectively, the Public Record Office, the Zairian national archives, and Belgian ecclesiastical archives.

The decolonization of Italian Africa was different in at least two fundamental respects: it was influenced directly in the cases of Eritrea and Somalia by the Italian aggression against Ethiopia (1935–1936) and the later liberation and occupation by Britain; though local anti-colonialist and nationalist movements helped to shape the context for decolonization, the final decisions about the disposition of these colonies and Libya were made in the United Nations General Assembly during the Cold War. In the late 1940s and early 1950s these issues were thoroughly discussed by capable scholars on the basis of published sources.

These researchers and subsequent ones had available to them some archi-

4. The *Supplément au Guide des Archives Africaines du Ministère des Affaires Africaines* (1885–1962) (1983) indicates that since April 1983 records which are under fifty years old but over thirty may be consulted with the approval of a diplomatic committee of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

val materials through 1943 captured by the Allies during the Second World War and filmed. Then in the 1970s Italy itself, while retaining a fifty-year rule on the use of its archives, began to permit a selective consultation of materials more than thirty years old, including those in the ministries of Italian Africa and of Foreign Affairs.⁵ Thus the sections of Claudio Segrè, *Fourth Shore: The Italian Colonization of Libya* (1974), which dealt with the course and demise of the Italian agricultural colonization in Libya between 1940 and the early 1960s, were based upon new primary sources. Then in 1980 there started to appear a new wave of research on the decolonization of the Italian Empire, using the newly opened British archives as well as some Italian ones. Probably the most important study so far is Gianluigi Rossi, *L'Africa italiana verso l'indipendenza (1941-1949)* (1980), which is based upon the British archives and mainly published Italian documentation. His study was preceded by the publication of several important articles dealing with various aspects of the subject, including the Libyan ones. Another scholar, Pier Giacomo Magri, *La politica estera etiopica e le questione eritrea e somala (1941-1960)* (1980) studied the Ethiopian influence and involvement in the disposition of the East African colonies. Giampaolo Calchi Novati (1980) employed Public Record Office materials, the Italian archives, and oral testimony in an important article on the Mogadishu incidents of January 1948. He concludes that the riots forced London to abandon the possibility of annexing Somalia and helped to foster the solution adopted at the U.N. Also to be noted is a multivolume work on the Italians in East Africa by the distinguished journalist Angelo Del Boca. His *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale* (volumes 2-4, 1977-1984) makes much more extensive use of the press and interviews, together with the full range of printed sources and some archives, to present a much more richly detailed, carefully nuanced and authoritative account of the Italian Empire from the 1930s through its end.

For Portuguese Africa, we see scholars grappling with the post-independence issues rooted in turbulent decolonization—the foreign involvement and the attempts radically to restructure society, issues very much related to the settler colonialism in adjacent southern-African states. The very different regional and international contexts for the Portuguese territories' decolonization when compared with French and Belgian is readily evident. What is also noticeable is that German scholars, and to a lesser extent Scandinavian and Dutch ones, who became involved in African studies on a significant scale

5. In a letter of 9 Sept. 1986, Dr. Mario Serio, the superintendent director-general of the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome, indicated that permission to consult materials on Africa through the end of 1955 may be sought from the Ministero dell'Interno. Inquiries about the use of materials in the Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, which has an autonomous status, should be made directly to that institution.

later than their British, French, Belgian, and American counterparts, have done an important part of the contemporary research on Portuguese territories.

The bulk of the reassessment of decolonization in black Africa has been the work of European and North American scholars. But in the case of the French North African countries nationals have also played an important role. Specifically, Algerian and Tunisian scholars, most of whom have been French educated, have been re-examining their own past. Their attention to the period of decolonization has involved a new look at the rise of anti-colonialism and nationalism from its earliest appearances (in the early 1900s in Tunisia; between the two world wars in Algeria through the post-Second World War period and independence. The roles of labor unions and of Islam have been carefully examined, as has the impact of the Second World War, with the use of newly available documents or ones not earlier employed in the case of Tunisia.⁶

OTHER RESEARCH ON DECOLONIZATION

Decolonization, as Eric Sellin noted in his review of *Transfer of Power* in the *Africana Journal* 13 (1982): 230–31, continues to receive much attention from scholars. In addition to the two conferences organized by Gifford and Louis—at Bellagio in 1977 and at Harare in 1985—there have been several others in recent years that have dealt with decolonization at least indirectly. The volume *Decolonisation and After*, discussed above, was the product of a conference in Paris in the late 1970s. A colloquium on the Second World War in Africa, sponsored by UNESCO as part of the process of preparing the final volume of the UNESCO history of Africa, which was held at Benghazi, Libya, in 1980, produced very little that was new. Only one of the essays in the volume which emerged from it, *L'Afrique et la seconde guerre mondiale* (1985), employed a significant body of new sources (that by the Cameroonian scholar Alexandre Kum'a Ndumbe III on Germany and black Africa), and few of the others contained any really important new insights.

By contrast, a conference organized in London during the summer of 1984 that dealt with the Second World War in Africa produced some significant results. Some of the papers from the conference have been published in David Killingray and Richard Rathbone, eds., *Africa and the Second World War* (London, 1986) and in the *Journal of African History* (1985). The papers on French black Africa are discussed in David Gardinier, "The Second World

6. For Tunisia, see Norma Salem, *Habib Bourguiba, Islam, and the Creation of Tunisia* (1984), for a perceptive review of this research.

War in French West Africa and Togo: Recent Research and Writing," *Proceedings of the French Colonial Historical Society* 10 (1985): 261–72. All of these papers deal in one way or another with the war as an accelerator or initiator of decolonization. Several employ the archives of FWA in Dakar or those in individual territories. One on Senegal uses newly opened materials in the Ministry of the Army at Vincennes near Paris. The papers and the other studies of the war period discussed in the article provide a much better understanding of the course and impact of the war in terms of decolonization. Finally, the conference organized in Paris in December 1984 under the auspices of the Institut pour l'Etude du Temps Présent included several papers that employed archival sources and other new primary materials. The conference, which is discussed by John Hargreaves in "Decolonisation, French Style," *West Africa*, 10 December 1984, encompassed the entire French Empire-Union, including both black and North Africa.⁷

CONTINUING AND REFERENCE SOURCES

In addition to the bibliographies in the various Gifford and Louis volumes, there are other bibliographies and continuing sources that a researcher may consult. Only the most important ones are described here. The *International African Bibliography* is published quarterly in London. The categories of classification are both topical and geographic, with more extensive coverage for black Africa than North Africa. A special feature of the *IAB* is that chapters in collective works are listed individually in addition to books and articles. The first issue of a new annual bibliography from Manchester resembles the *IAB* in form and content: Hector Blackhurst, comp., *African Bibliography*, 1984 (1985). It lists essays in edited volumes, pamphlets, and documents as well as books and articles. *Recently Published Articles* is published by the American Historical Association in Washington three times a year. The list on Africa is the second largest and includes articles from the humanities and social sciences of interest to historians and not just from history strictly defined. The lists on France and on Britain and the Commonwealth also have some entries of interest. For articles published in Africa itself, one may consult Colin Darch, ed., *Africa Index to Continental Periodical Literature* (Munich). Volume 7, covering 1982, was published in 1986 and is topically arranged.

In Paris the Centre d'Etudes Africaines of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales publishes *Bibliographie des travaux en langue française sur*

7. A conference sponsored by the Institut Charles de Gaulle was held in May 1987 in Paris in order to re-examine the importance of the Brazzaville Conference of 1944 on the basis of archival materials only recently made available.

l'Afrique du Sud du Sahara annually. It is the most important source for books and articles published in the former French and Belgian possessions.

At Tervuren, Belgium, the Musée Royale de l'Afrique Centrale annually publishes the *Bibliographie de l'Afrique Sud-Saharienne. Sciences humaines et sociales*. The volume for writings of 1980 was published in 1984. This bibliography, like the *IAB*, lists the chapters in collective works individually as well as books and articles. It sometimes cites works published in Asia not listed in the *IAB*. Its category "décolonisation" is much more broadly defined and therefore extensive than the comparable category in the *Bibliographie des travaux*. Also general, but strongest for former Belgian possessions, is the *Catalogue des acquisitions de la Bibliothèque Africaine* of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères in Brussels. The volume for 1976 was published in 1979. The *Bulletin intérieur du CEDAF*, published by the Centre d'Etude et de Documentation Africaine in Brussels twice a year, lists books and articles on the former Belgian territories.

A new periodical for Portuguese Africa, the *Revista internacional de estudos africanos*, began publication at Lisbon in 1984. The first two issues contained extensive retrospective bibliographies on Portuguese Africa back into the mid-1970s prepared by the editor, Jill Dias. She has indicated that current bibliographies are to be a regular feature of the review. The bibliographies reveal that a considerable number of publications in the social sciences and humanities in Portuguese, Spanish, German, and Scandinavian languages have not reached libraries and research collections in anglophone and francophone countries where most indexing for continuing bibliographies is being conducted.

For Italian Africa, the journal *Africa*, published quarterly in Rome, indexes Africanist and international-affairs journals published in Italy and the former Italian possessions. The *Bibliografia nazionale italiana* lists works by Italians on Africa, though it is always a few years in arrears. But there is no continuing source on all of Italian Africa.

For North Africa researchers should consult the *International Index Islamicus*, which is published in London quarterly following the same format as the *IAB*. The *Middle East Journal*, published in Washington quarterly, contains lists of books and articles arranged topically and, for history, chronologically. Its special merits are the inclusion of works in Arabic and an extensive list of official documents. Publications on the external dimensions of Chad's problems are included. Also for North Africa, the *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* from the Centre de Recherche at the University of Aix-en-Provence includes a bibliography that is strongest for works published in France and North African countries themselves in both western languages and Arabic. The volume also contains documents and chronologies of events.

There is a comparable volume, the *Annuaire de l'océan indien* published at Aix-en-Provence, which includes Djibouti, Madagascar, and the Comoros. The bibliographies are thorough for francophone sources, and the documents and chronologies useful.

For reviews of books and collections, abstracts of them and of articles, there is a diverse number of sources. *Cultures et développement*, published quarterly at the University of Louvain in Belgium, and *Mondes et cultures*, published quarterly by the Académie des Sciences d'Outre-Mer in Paris, have the entire "third world" as their purview. *Cultures et développement* has the most extensive book-review section on decolonization in French and Belgian Africa available anywhere, while *Mondes et cultures* is particularly strong for former French territories, both sub-Saharan and North African. The *Cahiers d'études africaines*, published in Paris four times a year, has excellent one-paragraph summaries of the contents and theses of new books in African studies. Its list of newly published "books received" should be consulted, as should the one in *Cultures et développement*. The single most important source for finding out what has been published on French, Belgian, Portuguese, and Italian Africa is *Afrique contemporaine*, published in Paris quarterly. It gives brief summaries of the contents and indicates some of the themes of most of the books that it lists, which are works covering the entire field of African studies. *Mundus: A Quarterly Review of German Contributions on Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Arts and Sciences*, published in English at Stuttgart, contains detailed books reviews and a selected bibliography of new books and articles.

Also from Germany is one of the two important abstract journals in African Studies, the *Dokumentationsdienst Afrika. Ausgewahlte neuere Literatur*, published quarterly at Hamburg, which has abstracts of articles and chapters of books. The Afrika-Studie Centrum of the University of Leiden in the Netherlands publishes *Documentatieblad: The Abstracts Journal of the African Studies Center, Leiden* quarterly. It contains abstracts of books and journal articles.

This bibliography includes some doctoral dissertations and theses, as well as memoirs. American and Canadian dissertations and theses are summarized in *Dissertation Abstracts International* and *Masters Abstracts International* by University Microfilms International, which also lists the dissertations annually by subject in *American Doctoral Dissertations*. In ASA News Joseph Lauer regularly compiles lists of doctoral dissertations in African studies from these sources. *Sahel Bibliographic Bulletin*, published at East Lansing, Michigan, periodically lists dissertations on the Sahel countries in West and Equatorial Africa. The American Historical Association twice a year publishes *Doctoral Dissertations in History*, both completed and in progress. The lists

are not comprehensive for they include only those that are submitted by history departments or the individual authors. To these continuing sources should be added Michael Sims and Alfred Kagan, comps., *American & Canadian Dissertations and Master's Theses on Africa, 1886-1974* (1976), and Michael Sims, comp., *U.S. Doctoral Dissertations in Third World Studies, 1969-1978* (1980).

For the United Kingdom *African Research and Documentation* regularly lists British dissertations and theses on Africa, while *Latin Africa*, published since 1982 by the Center of African Studies of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, gives those for countries where French, Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish are or have recently been the official language. Also available are J. H. St. J. McIlwaine, comp., *Theses on Africa, 1963-1975, Accepted by Universities in the United Kingdom and Ireland* (1978), the latest in the series sponsored by SCOLMA, and Peter Sluglett, comp., *Theses on Islam, the Middle East, and North-West Africa, 1880-1978, Accepted by Universities in the United Kingdom and Ireland* (1983). Finally, the Institute of Historical Research of the University of London annually issues a bibliography of British dissertations completed and in progress, including those in African history.

For France the Centre d'Etudes Africaines and CARDAN are jointly publishing *Répertoire des thèses africanistes françaises*, beginning with the year 1977. The most recent volume is for 1980-1981 (1984). This publication succeeds the volumes published solely by CARDAN for the years 1966-1976.

Theses on the former Belgian territories are listed in the *Bulletin intérieur du CEDAF*, cited above. Dutch theses are regularly listed in the *Newsletter of African Studies in the Netherlands*, published at the African Studies Center in Leiden. Italian doctoral theses on Africa are regularly listed in the Rome quarterly, *Africa*. There are frequently reviews of the most important ones and sometimes chapters published as articles.

There is no list of doctoral dissertations or theses completed in Portugal, of which at the present time there are only a few on Africa in the social sciences and humanities each year. The *Portuguese Studies Newsletter* lists some dissertations on Portuguese Africa. A new publication, the *Boletim do Departamento de História da Universidade Edouardo Mondlane* 1 (1985) lists dissertations on Mozambique completed or in progress worldwide. Olivier Pollak and Karen Pollak, comps., *Theses and Dissertations on Southern Africa: An International Bibliography* (1976) contains some on Mozambique and Angola, while N. Ernest Kettenring, *A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations on Portuguese Topics Completed in the United States and Canada, 1861-1983* (1984), has those on Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde as well.

Two important archival guides have been published during the past dec-

ade. Jean Favier, comp., *Les archives nationales, état général des fonds*, vol. 3. *Marine et Outre-Mer* (1980), surveys the holdings in the French National Archives, including ministerial papers and the documents from the direction des Affaires Politiques of the Overseas Ministry. Madeleine Van Girken-Taverniers, *La colonisation belge en Afrique Centrale: guide des archives africaines du Ministère des Affaires Africaines, 1885-1962* (1981), includes the Belgian Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi. A sixteen-page *Supplément* to this work was issued in 1983.

History in Africa, published annually by the African Studies Association under the editorship of David P. Henige, regularly contains descriptions of archival holdings in many private as well as public archives in Europe and Africa by researchers who have used them for a particular topic. Such articles are listed within the categories of this bibliography.

Researchers whose topics include American involvement should consult Aloha South, ed., *Guide to Federal Archives* (1977), and two works prepared under the direction of Julian W. Witherell of the Library of Congress: *The U.S. and Sub-Saharan Africa: Guide to U.S. Official Documents and Government-Sponsored Publications, 1785-1975* (1978) and *1976-1980* (1984).

Three volumes by Yvette Scheven of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana include recent guides to archives and research collections while concentrating on current bibliographies in African studies: *Bibliographies for African Studies, 1970-1975* (1977), *1976-1979* (1980), and *1980-1983* (1984). There are many journals regularly publishing bibliographies that include Africa and decolonization. Lists of 155 of them are found in two articles by David P. Henige in *History in Africa*: "Taking Arms Against a Sea of Scholarship: Serial Bibliographies and Indexes of Interest to African Historians" 11 (1983): 109-49 and "Yet More Serial Bibliographies" 12 (1984): 357-62. These basically Africanist bibliographies have been included in the same author's *Serial Bibliographies and Abstracts in History: An Annotated Guide* (1986) where further Africanist materials can be identified among the 875 entries.

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